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LIGUORIAN

**How Parents
Block Vocations**

**What Boys
Think of
Girls' Dress**

**DID
CHRIST
CRY?**

**Why
Frequent
Confession?**



THE Liguorian

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THE LIGUORIAN

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How Parents

This article explains how the shortage of priestly and religious vocations may be traced back in great measure to homes. Next month an article will treat of how parents can foster such vocations.

Block Vocations

IT CAN be stated without any doubt or fear of denial that one of the marks of a truly Catholic family is that the parents cherish the hope that at least one, if not more of their children, will be called to and will follow a vocation to the priestly or religious life.

Indeed, this is so true that it can be said with equal force that there is something incomplete and underdeveloped about the faith of Catholic parents who are either lacking in such a desire, or actually opposed to seeing any of their children called to serve God in one of the higher walks of life.

The desire of which we speak must be rightly understood. It should never be such as to inspire the use of pressure or force of any kind, even of the most indirect kind. Parental pressures to force children into a religious or priestly vocation are absolutely contrary to the will of God and can make for great unhappiness in the later lives of the children involved.

Nor is the desire of the right kind if it is inspired by the wrong motives. A wrong motive would be the unhappiness of a mother and father in respect to their marriage. For example,

a mother who feels dissatisfied or miserable over her lot in marriage, may sometimes think that the only way to save her children from a similar fate is to pressure them into the priestly or religious life. This is all wrong. While it is true that some good priests and religious have come from unhappy homes, it is a general principle that good vocations to the higher walks of life ordinarily come from good, solid, happy Catholic homes.

To make this matter practical and clear, it is necessary to treat of three things: I. The limitations of parental influence; II. Parental action that blocks or impedes vocations to a higher life; II. Parental action that fosters such vocations.

I. The Limitations of Parental Action

IT WOULD be foolish to suggest that vocations to the priestly or religious life can be *caused* or *created* in children by any kind of parental action. God is the only final and efficient cause of such vocations. Unless he issues the invitation and the grace, there is never a true vocation in the sense in which we are using the word here. That is why some parents will always have to suffer disappointment in this regard.

But it would be equally foolish to say that parents can have nothing to do with *fostering* vocations, and co-operating with God's will in seeing that true vocations to a higher life are not missed or lost.

We know for a fact that God gives many more invitations to the priest-

hood and religious life than are actually answered. This is clear because God never leaves needs of the world unfulfilled, and a vastly greater number of priests, nuns and religious brothers is needed than is being supplied today. The reason is because the free will that God gave to human beings is capable of spoiling God's plans by resisting or rejecting His graces and invitations.

Very often it is the parents who are responsible for the failure of their children to recognize or accept a vocation to the priesthood or religious life. Parents have been given wonderful opportunities and tremendous responsibilities to assist their children in finding and following their true vocation. It is in their power to create an atmosphere in the home, to set up conditions, that will either impede or foster the recognition of higher vocations in their children.

Thus, without for a moment forgetting or anticipating the indispensable grace of God, we can set down a list of attitudes, habits and actions within the home which impede the fulfillment of higher vocations in children, and a similar list of the same which foster and aid the fulfillment of such vocations.

II. Parental Action That Impedes Higher Vocations

ONE general characteristic of a home that usually eliminates the possibility that vocations to the priesthood or the religious life will be recognized and accepted in that home is lack of day-to-day practical Catholic living.

A family is not living a practical Catholic life if 1) the parents do not lead the way in receiving the sacraments often; 2) there is very little or no family prayer; 3) there are practically no reminders of spiritual things in the home, such as crucifixes in prominent places, holy pictures, holy water, blessed candles, some Catholic books, pamphlets and weekly or monthly publications; 4) there is rarely any reference to God or Christ or our Lady or the truths of faith in the conversations carried on in the home.

A home without such things is usually a worldly home, that is, one in which worldly ambitions will be fostered in the minds and hearts of children to the exclusion of any thought of spiritual ideals and desires to serve God in a special way.

Besides this general atmosphere that impedes vocations, or rather as a by-product of the general worldly atmosphere, many specific wrong attitudes and practices on the part of parents can and do smother incipient thoughts of a higher vocation in their children. Among them are the following:

1. Lack of respect for priests and nuns.

This is often obvious in the open and vicious criticism of priests and of nuns that children are allowed to overhear from the lips of their parents. It is sad that there are many Catholic parents who hold an unconcealed grudge against priests and

nuns. The priest has a good car and he plays golf; therefore he never does any work. The priest has a vow of celibacy and no family, and therefore he makes no sacrifices and has an easy life. The priest now and then asks his parishioners for more money to support the Church and therefore he is trying to enrich himself. Or an individual priest may have crossed the wishes of some families of the parish, and from that day on some of these families never stop running down that priest.

Similar criticisms are often made openly and constantly of the sisters or brothers teaching in the parish school, because they do things in a way that does not quite suit the ideas of certain parents.

Children who grow up in a home in which such criticism of priests and sisters and brothers forms a quite frequent topic of conversation have little chance of learning to look upon a vocation to one of these states as noble or important or desirable. They will be far more apt to smother any leaning in that direction because they do not want ever to become the butt of similar treatment from other parents.

2. Constant insistence on the parents' need of their children for many years to come.

It is possible for parents practically to hypnotize their children into an inescapable feeling that their parents cannot do without them, and could scarcely survive if any of their chil-

dren left them at an early age to prepare for the priesthood or religious life.

There are rare cases in which parents are so sick and crippled, and so incapable of taking care of themselves, that a seminary or a religious order would have to refuse entry to any of their children on the ground that they are obviously needed by their parents.

Even, however, in the absence of such obvious and objective need, it is possible for parents to make their children feel that they are needed and will be needed for an indefinite future.

Sometimes, this is effected through motives of greed. The parents have enough worldly income and possessions to live without want, but they do not have as much as they would like to have. Or, lacking true confidence in God, they have great fears that some catastrophe may overtake them in the future, at which time they would become dependent on their children. In either case they use their parental influence to convince their children that they "owe it to their parents" not to leave them. This can be a very insidious but effective way of smothering vocations to a higher life.

Sometimes the same result is attained through a motive of exaggerated and selfish love. Children are made to feel that their parents are so dependent on their companionship and love that their hearts would break if a child of theirs were to leave them for the seminary or the

religious life at any time between the ages of 14 and 20. The least suggestion of such a possibility calls forth parental tears and wailings. No adolescent who has normal feelings of love and obedience for parents can be unaffected by such opposition.

In the end the selfishness of such parents is not served anyway. They may have blocked a religious or priestly vocation in their children, but even those who have given up or lost such a vocation for the sake of their parents will eventually marry and then drift farther away from their parents than they ever would have in a higher vocation.

3. *Building up a growing child's dream of some way of life other than the priesthood or the religious life so strongly that the latter are never even open to consideration.*

Some fond mothers begin, when their daughters are only eight or nine years old, to plant the conviction in their minds that the only vocation to look forward to is that of marriage. Whatever instructions they impart on matters of sex center around this assumption. Whenever the future of the children is discussed it is taken for granted that the daughters will some day be wives and mothers.

Fathers, too, can condition the minds of their sons to think only in terms of a future worldly career. The pattern of thinking in the family is that the sons will join and then carry on the business in which the father is engaged, or will go to great universities and become doctors or lawyers or teachers or writers, etc.

There just is no place in the family's thinking and talking for anything but a secular career for the children.

In the worldly atmosphere of today, it is difficult for parents to escape from having worldly dreams about the future of their children. But if they have genuine faith, and a true desire that God's will, not theirs, be done, they will resist the temptation to plant their own dreams in the minds and imaginations of their children. They will be aware that God's will may manifest itself as different from their own, and make their children realize that God's will is the most important thing in the world.

4. Fostering childish or early adolescent boy-girl relationships.

This mistake is usually made by mothers who cannot conceive of any future for their children except marriage. They feel that they have to begin at the earliest possible moment to cultivate attractions between their children and friends of the other sex. Only in this way, they argue, can they make sure that their children will not suffer from such inhibitions, restraints, bashfulness and misgivings as might hamper their chances of marriage.

Actually, even for children whose vocation will turn out to be marriage, it is a great disservice for parents to thrust them into boy-girl relationships at a premature age. Those parents who insist that their seventh, eighth and ninth grade children take up ballroom dancing, who cluck with approval over their having "steadies," who trust these youngsters as if

they were incapable of experiencing a temptation, are very often responsible for their children entering foolish and imprudent marriages, or for their early lapses into unchastity that are as serious an obstacle to happy marriage as anything in the world.

And naturally this sort of parental conduct eliminates at an early age the possibility of children recognizing and following a priestly or religious vocation. Sex is a powerful instinct; coddled too early, it can drive all other inspirations or desires from the heart.

5. Stubbornly holding the position that no child should even consider a vocation to the priesthood or religious life until he is 20 or 21 years of age.

How often one hears parents talk in this vein: "I am not against a religious or priestly vocation for my son or daughter. But I will not permit them to choose to pursue such a vocation until they are good and mature. Let them learn something about the world first. Let them complete their college education. Then if they wish to choose a higher calling they may do so with open eyes and an adult point of view."

Only God knows how many vocations to the priesthood or religious life have been lost as a result of this erroneous parental attitude. A boy of 14 or 15 can know enough and love God enough to want to try out for the priesthood; he will not have to make a final decision until all of 10 years later. Similarly with a girl of 16 or 17 wanting to be a nun. Turn

them over to the world by making them wait several years and the very desire that was placed in their hearts by God can be smothered out of existence.

Next month this discussion will be continued with a summary of what parents can do in a positive way to foster the higher vocation among their children.

THE PARENT'S PRAYER FOR A FAMILY VOCATION

O merciful God, fulfill our desire that our home become the nursery of a vocation to the priesthood or the religious life, that our home be a seminary of novitiate filled with the Holy Spirit and productive of Christian virtue, and that we may be God-fearing and pious parents to whom our child can after Thee trace his vocation. Grant that we may never fail to utter the encouraging word influencing our children toward a consecrated life, thus cooperating in Thy Divine plan. Thou has promised to reward a hundredfold and with everlasting life those who leave father and mother, brothers and sisters for Thy sake and shalt also remember us who have given one of ours unto Thee.

Pour forth Thy Spirit abundantly upon our family, that at least one child from it, beholding this path that leads to perfection, will set foot upon it unafraid. Holy Spirit, do Thou descend upon this chosen one. Do Thou, Lord Jesus, dwell in that dedicated heart that it may comprehend the height, the length, the breadth and the depth of Thy all consuming love. Amen.

Newman Guide

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What Boys Think of Girls' Dress

HUGH J. O'CONNELL, C.S.S.R.

WHAT do boys really think of the way girls dress? What types of feminine dress are for them a source of temptation and moral danger? What is their opinion of tight sweaters, blue jeans, shorts, formals and swim suits?

To get an answer to these interesting and important questions, you have to go to the boys themselves. And that is just what we're going to do in this article.

Experience proves that it is fairly futile for priests and nuns to talk to young women about modesty in dress. Apparently the girls seem to think that anyone who goes about in a long black garment cannot possibly know anything about clothes.

But the boys themselves certainly should know what effect the various types of feminine dress have upon them; and in the right circumstances, they can be persuaded to speak candidly on this matter.

In order to obtain firsthand information on this subject, a series of questions was presented to 1,205 teen-age boys in two large cities. These were ordinary, normal boys, attending Catholic high schools, most of whom had sisters, and went on dates with girls.

The opening paragraph of this survey stated: "The priests believe that girls do not sufficiently realize the influence of their dress on boys and young men. Believing that firsthand information is preferable to a priest's preconceptions on the question, they are requesting that you answer these questions carefully and

Here, in their own forthright words are boys' comments on girls' dress. We are indebted for the material in this article to the Rev. Edwin Haungs, S.J. and to the Chicago Inter-Student Catholic Action.

honestly. What they will say to the girls in the future depends in part on what you tell them. They are sincerely asking for your opinion and request that you be equally sincere in furnishing the following information."

In order to insure perfect freedom, no one was asked to sign his name. Each boy was requested to tell his age, whether he had any sisters, and how often he dated or associated with girls.

After this, the survey sought information as to whether the attire of the girls dated by each boy was a source of temptation to him. From a moral viewpoint, his reaction was asked to the following: 1) normal street clothes; 2) sweaters, dungarees, etc., as worn by girls; 3) shorts; 4) evening gowns; 5) swimming suits. After stating their views, the boys were then asked to offer any suggestions which they thought might be made to girls regarding their dress, insofar as it influenced the individual boy or his friends.

We will present the boys' comments in their own forthright and sometimes blunt words, and then proceed to analyze the answers and draw some practical conclusions.

General Comments

1) "Girls should realize that the way they dress has a very serious effect on fellows whether they be strangers on streets or friends on dates. They should try as hard as possible to refrain from wearing dungarees, tight sweaters, and tight skirts."

2) "Girls should be most careful in the attire which they choose. Even if they have no intention of being immodest, they should realize that a boy is aroused very easily."

3) "When a boy sees a girl in a tight sweater or jeans or a low-cut bathing suit, he tends to think she is not decent or modest because of her dress. Therefore, a boy would seek the girl that is indecent in dress to fulfill his evil desires. Since dress has a terrific effect on a boy, and he begins to form his opinion of her when he first sees her, the girl is responsible for whether this opinion is good or bad."

4) "Girls should remember that boys are excited rather easily and that a poor choice of dress by a girl may lead to something distasteful and impure. Girls' dress effects boys more than they think it does."

5) "Girls, who wear such clothes as dungarees, tight shirts, sloppily and with too much makeup, are on the black-list with boys who are decent and clean living Catholics. Frankly, a boy does not consider a girl the 'bring home to mother type' but rather a 'pickup.' A girl with the proper attire, make-up and personality always looks more attractive and more decent not only to boys but to grownups as well."

6) "I think a girl's attire has a lot to do with a boy in his reactions. A boy gets more easily aroused than a girl and, if he sees a girl in a bad outfit, he is bound to get aroused."

Therefore, dangerous occasions of sin; therefore, a girl should wear decent clothes wherever she goes."

7) "To me, the way a girl dresses means everything. For I (and many other guys) think sloppy, sexy, dirty clothes make a guy think the girl is also dirty or 'trampish.'"

8) "Please make it very strong — girls should never wear tight or too revealing clothes."

Tight Sweaters and Thin Blouses

THERE is no question that tight sweaters and thin blouses are the number one source of temptation for young men today. This is probably due to the terrific emphasis of modern advertising on the feminine bosom, and the tremendous publicity that certain overstuffed Hollywood actresses have received because of their bust measurements. Ninety-one per cent of the boys — 1,092 out of 1,205 — stated that they are frequently, or at least sometimes tempted as a result of girls wearing such sweaters or blouses. Some of their comments are as follows:

1) "Makes them look tough and like tramps."

2) "Out of place in the presence of boys. Such attire tends to tempt."

3) "Sweaters are okay, as long as they are tight enough to show that she is a woman, and loose enough to show that she is a lady."

4) "Sweaters, the proper size, are usually not a source of temptation."

5) "According to how worn. If worn in good taste, indifferent. If the

girl wears a sweater too small for her figure, it definitely causes temptation."

6) "The too tight 'fashions' are definitely trouble — give me ideas."

7) "Some girls wear them too tight. This makes a boy believe she is asking for trouble."

8) "Horrible on fat girls."

9) "Tight sweaters are provocative and worn only by girls who wish to provoke men."

10) "Girls who wear tight sweaters are asking for trouble."

Dungarees and Blue Jeans

BLUE jeans, dungarees, and slacks are provocative, according to the boys' answers, only if they are too tight; however, the boys certainly seem to dislike them on girls. Only five per cent found blue jeans and slacks a source of temptation when worn for a sport. Ten per cent, if worn as street wear. Thirty per cent had trouble if the girls wore levis or tight dungarees or jeans. Here are some of their comments:

1) "Dungarees are liable to give a boy the idea that the girl wearing them is a bum."

2) "Dungarees that are two sizes too small are objectionable in my opinion, and make the girl look cheap."

3) "A girl who wears pants two sizes too small, makes a boy often look upon her as a 'fast pickup.'"

4) "Most of the time I wouldn't give them a second look, because they look like slobs."

5) "Dungarees are all right for scrubbing floors."

6) "I don't mind slacks, but dungarees are out."

7) "Dungarees take away from a girl her femininity."

8) "Terrible! Dungarees on a girl with a sweater hanging over them!"

9) "Dungarees, if they are worn the correct size, are not too bad; but I seldom see a girl wear her size."

Shorts

ONLY three per cent of the boys said they were bothered by bermudas or pedal pushers if they were worn for sport; eleven per cent if they were worn as street wear. The picture is different, however, for shorts and short shorts. Fifty-three per cent of the boys said they were bothered by both of these when worn on the street. Twenty-one per cent were troubled by shorts when worn for sport; and forty-four per cent by short shorts for sportswear. Here's what they have to say:

1) "Give boys temptations if not worn with modesty."

2) "Very short shorts (especially more than ten inches above the knees) are very tempting."

3) "Shorts are a source of immoral thoughts."

4) "Definitely arousing when short and tight."

5) "Bermudas are no problem. But real short shorts present strong temptations."

6) "Shorts on some girls look like they were painted on; short shorts should not be worn in public."

7) "Often act as a source of temptation because a large part of the body is shown. I try to avoid girls who are wearing them."

8) "The shorts usually go along with immoral poses and posture."

9) "OUT! They make a girl look half undressed."

10) "They are simply ridiculous when worn on the street, and as far as I am concerned, they make a girl look ridiculous to the extent that they repel rather than attract."

11) "Okay for children, but not for girls in the street."

Swim Suits

SWIM suits are part of every modern girl's wardrobe. What of their effect on boys? The young men severely criticized low-cut, revealing swim suits. Modestly styled swim suits were rarely considered by them to be an occasion of sin as long as the girl's actions and posture were modest. Here is what the boys have to say:

1) "They are a source of temptation when too small or too tight."

2) "They should cover enough."

3) "Girls should wear one piece suits which are modest."

4) "Bikinis are disgusting, awful, and dangerous."

5) "Most two piece suits are really hot."

6) "Should not be skintight."

7) "No two piece suit should be worn by any woman."

8) "Should be one piece, preferably with straps."

9) "At the beach, some of the girls are literally bulging out at their seams."

10) "Normal types are all right—the more scanty disgust me."

11) "The smaller the suit, the bigger the temptation."

12) "Most of the time it isn't the bathing suit, but the position that the girl takes on the beach."

13) "Some suits are just a little too much to take — the reason is the same as in a nudist colony."

14) "A decent swim suit is okay—but not one about which you might wonder if she is inside trying to get out, or outside trying to get in."

15) "One piece — fine. Two pieces — dangerous, very dangerous to both parties."

Formals

EVERY girl dreams of herself looking romantic and beautiful in a lovely evening gown. The trouble is that modern formals are so revealing that they tend to waken not romance, but lust in the male. Listen to what the boys have to say:

1) "No strapless, please!"

2) "The lower the cut, the higher the temptation."

3) "Some evening gowns are beautiful and fine, but others show too much of what a girl has, making her look cheap and sexy."

4) "Proper when kept on the shoulders and no 'V-neckline.'"

5) "They should be chosen on the basis of common sense. A girl knows when she is in a modest gown and she knows when she isn't."

6) "A low-cut evening gown makes me sit on edge all night."

7) "A plunging neckline doesn't leave much to the imagination."

8) "Any girl in an evening gown is at the peak of feminine charm, provided the gown is not outrageously provocative."

9) "Evening gowns should be in good taste and not 'eye shockers.' A severely low-cut gown might be a temptation to a boy or it might even embarrass him to know that every other boy in the place is looking at his girl with a gleam in his eye."

10) "Some are cut too low and the strongest boy or man can't resist."

11) "A girl does not have to show off half of her body to please a guy."

12) "Should have enough material to hold on to the shoulders."

13) "I prefer ones with fairly high necks. I don't want anyone looking at my date crosseyed."

14) "I think the dress with the low-cut or bare or semi-bare shoulders is very dangerous and inviting."

15) "A girl can look nicer in a high-necked gown than in a daring, immodest, off-the-shoulder or strapless gown."

16) "I hold less respect for a girl who tries by her dress to invite the emotions and passions of a boy. I prefer one who influences by her personality."

17) "A guy would prefer to admire a girl rather than to be aroused by her."

18) "Any gown which is so low-cut that it shows the slightest part of the breasts, cheapens a girl."

19) "Low-cut gowns are a source of temptation, while a nice, but definitely up to the neck affair dress makes a girl look charming."

20) "Are very low-cut and at times are an X-ray machine that shows everything she owns."

Conclusions

A STUDY of the answers and comments made by the boys bring out clearly that the young men are severely tempted: 1) by any manner of dress that emphasizes those parts of the body in which girls differ from boys, notably the breasts and hips; 2) by large bare expanses of female flesh, such as revealed by short shorts, two piece swim suits, and low-cut evening gowns; 3) by provocative postures and attitudes. We take for granted that decent girls do not want to awaken lust or cause their boy friends to sin. Why then do they wear such dress? It is because all too often they do not realize the effect on boys. Girls are emotional; boys passionate. Girls are romantic; boys strongly attracted to the physical. This is not because boys are necessarily evil or bad. It is simply the way they are made. All through nature, the male is the aggressor, and his passions are as a rule more quickly aroused. The girl is simply looking for attention — that's a natural feminine instinct; she becomes outraged if the boys get fresh. However, if she dresses and acts in a provocative manner, that is what to the boy she seems to be looking for.

Actually, although many modern girls do not seem to realize this, modesty is a woman's most attractive charm. On the other hand, the lack of modesty cheapens and coarsens the girl in a man's eyes. Many men will be tempted to take advantage of a girl whose dress and manner proclaims her an easy 'pickup.' However, a man will want to marry only

a girl whom he can respect and admire. No man wants the woman he loves, by her dress and actions, to attract the roving eyes and awaken the evil desires of other men.

Catholic women and girls, conscious of their dignity as the daughters of God by grace, must stand together against the tide of pagan immodesty that threatens to engulf the modern world. Mindful of the value of every immortal soul, they should make sure that they are never by their dress or actions an occasion of sin to others. "God forbid," each girl should say in her heart, "that any soul should be lost through my fault!"

YOU CHOOSE!

When you are dealing with your soul you are dealing with yourself. Your soul makes you what you are and when you work for or neglect your soul you are working for or neglecting yourself. When you decide the eternal condition of your soul you are deciding the eternal condition of yourself. No one else can save your soul for you. Others can help you save your soul, — by prayer, encouragement, good advice, — your relatives and friends and the priest who administers the sacraments to you in life and at death. Surely God also helps you by His wonderful gifts of grace; but if, at the moment when you die, your soul is not in His friendship, even God cannot save you. The final choice lies with you and you alone.

READERS



ASK

Why Frequent Confession?

Louis G. Miller, C.S.S.R.

QUESTION: *I would like to know why we are urged to go to frequent confession. Do the priests think we are leading such terribly sinful lives? I find myself wondering if I am some kind of a freak because I try to do what is right. If I don't have some big, willful sin to confess, what's the use of wasting the time of the priest?*

ANSWER: When we urge frequent confession, it by no means implies that we think average Catholics are leading terribly sinful lives. We are well aware of the undoubted fact that there are many good people who are trying sincerely and seriously to observe God's law, and with the help of God's grace are able to keep themselves habitually from serious sin.

It would seem, however, that our questioner is overlooking the important secondary purpose of confession. The sacrament was instituted primarily, of course, to take away sins. Christ designed it to be a means of extending God's forgiveness to the repentant sinner. But there is a secondary purpose of the sacrament which is of tremendous importance and significance. This secondary purpose is to serve as a source of grace and help and strength in the problems and trials of each day.

In fact, the sacramental grace of the sacrament is unique; it is a special kind of assistance received only in this way and at this time.

There is no human being on this earth who is not guilty of at least small faults and sins in the course of his daily life. Most of these can be said to center around impatience or unkindness or perhaps carelessness about prayer. The Catholic who approaches the sacrament frequently, and confesses these small sins, since they are the only ones he can find on his conscience, receives a special grace to help him precisely in his continuing struggle to be a little less impatient and a little more kind.

The saints, who were much closer to God than other mortals, nevertheless invariably made frequent use of the sacrament of penance. They did so for the reason given above. But they did so also because as they grew to love God more, and understood His infinite holiness better, they felt all the more keenly their unworthiness, and recognized in confession a means of obtaining ever greater purity of conscience.

Frequent confession in this sense should not be a torment, but it can surely be recommended as an instrument of growth in the love of God.

Did Christ Cry?

The Gospels make it clear that Christ wept. Here is an examination of the reason for His tears.

SINCE water makes up approximately 90% of the human body, a human being must certainly have a great capacity for tears. Crying is so characteristic of a human being that, even if the fact that Christ cried were not actually substantiated by documentary evidence, still no one would doubt it. Not to cry is not human. At times it is considered almost inhuman.

There are people who feel shocked at the suggestion that Christ could possibly have laughed. But it is a sad commentary on "life in this vale of tears" that everyone admits that He cried. Apparently it is much easier to imagine the Infant Saviour whimpering and weeping in His straw-upholstered crib than to picture Him as gurgling with joy and laughing delightedly while His Mother bathes Him or hoists Him in "oops-a-daisy" elevation. (Please don't deny her such mild, maternal exuberance.)

Intellectually, however, it is more difficult to understand how a God could weep than how a God could laugh. How is it possible that He who is completely, infinitely, supremely happy could have broken down and cried? Let it be admitted that He did not come to earth for laughs. For, after all, He could have remained in heaven, the land of holy laughter and deep joy. Surely we cannot even toy with the thought that He came to earth resolved to break Himself of the happy habit. Nevertheless it is harder to understand why he wanted to learn to cry.

Possibly He decided to test and taste the bitterness of tears personally so that none of us might be tempted to say that it was easy enough for Him to laugh, since in heaven He never had any cause for tears. So He took the plunge, deep into our flooded valley. He even upped the water line a bit by adding a tear or two of His own. He cried.

He cried, we know, at the tomb of His friend, Lazarus. Why? To say that the sole reason was because He had lost a friend would be a mistake. This is what was supposed by the people standing around on that occasion. They thought Christ wept for the same reason that they themselves were bedewing the tomb: because their mutual friend, Lazarus, was dead; he was taken from them, and would return no more.

However, a careful reading of the whole incident (John 11:1-46) clearly indicates that Christ was fully aware of the fact that Lazarus was about to rise up again. And who would grieve over so happy a prospect?

As a matter of fact Christ spoke in so matter-of-fact a way when He referred to the death of Lazarus as sleep that His disciples misunderstood Him. Their chatter resurrected the old platitudes about sleep being the best medicine, nature's own prescription, a good sign that he'd pull through all right, etc. etc. So the good Lord had to put it plainly. He said: "Lazarus is dead; and I rejoice. . . ." There we have it! He was happy about the death of Lazarus because it was "for the glory of God." So it was nothing to cry about.

Still He cried. Why? No, His were not tears of joy. For He not only wept but "groaned." And even a sound-effects man cannot produce a groan of gladness. A happy sigh, perhaps. But not a gay groan.

It would appear equally erroneous to assume that Christ cried because

He was disappointed in the way Martha and Mary behaved. Their reaction to the death of their brother was natural and normal. Their tears were as right as rain. Undoubtedly the great Christ must have been highly pleased with Martha's magnificent manifestation of faith and Mary's monumental trust in her Master as she fell limp and lovingly at His feet.

Still it was then that He groaned and wept. Why? Scholars advise us to notice that the "weeping" of Christ was not the same kind of "weeping" which was being done by Martha, Mary and the onlookers. His tears were of a different distillation. The Greeks had a word for it. The Greek Gospel word that describes Christ's weeping indicates that His tears were not just strong but ANGRY tears. Understood in the right sense, it can be said that "Christ was so justly angry that He cried."

It should hardly be necessary to remark that anger is not necessarily sinful. "Be angry and sin not" is a quotation from the Bible itself. (Psalms 4:5) At least on two occasions Christ was so angry (because the Jews were making a supermarket out of the temple) that he overthrew their tables and whipped them with knotted cords.

Now the anger that can only find release in tears is the anger of frustration. True, Christ could and would raise Lazarus from the dead and thus dry the tears of Martha and Mary. But, although omnipotence can dry tears, it cannot prevent them. Although it can change tears to joy

it cannot change the process that almost inevitably produces tears.

People are little, self-propelled machines with built-in controls. And even a God cannot control these controls without radically changing the whole machine. Since He made them free He must let them run themselves freely, even though they run over each other, run each other down, run amuck. Obviously, if a man is free to murder he must be supplied with an innocent victim. Furnished with the furious freedom of beating his wife to a pulp, the wife-beater beats God out of the power of protecting the poor little wife from the beating. Because He made man free, God will allow even innocent babies to suffer from the abuse of that freedom. He can *forgive* sin, but in making man free, He chose not to *prevent* it. Within the terms of that gift to man He chooses even not to prevent the sad consequences of sin. These consequences are death, sorrow, suffering and tears.

At the tomb of Lazarus, Christ felt the sheer stupidity of sin which made innocent victims of Martha and Mary

and millions upon millions of human beings. God would not withdraw the gift of freedom — and so the stupidity must remain. One can therefore say of Christ that in a fury of frustration He groaned, He writhed and He cried.

Of course He had brought it on Himself. To have created beings and given them the power of self-determination was, in a sense, to put limits on the exercise of His own limitless power. Nevertheless, despite all the tears (His own included), it was worth it. It was worth it just to have a Martha and a Mary rush out to meet Him, impelled by no other force than that which was generated by their own free, spontaneous, self-ignited love.

But He couldn't help crying. Simply because they were crying. For although He is able to change tears into gems of joy, He cannot prevent the sorrows and tears of the people He loves. Let no one doubt it: He was angered to tears because Martha and Mary and you and I could not go laughing all through life.

FROM OUTSIDE

Clare Boothe Luce once remarked that the Church is like a stained-glass window — it can be seen and appreciated only from the inside. How does it look from the outside? It is difficult for "born Catholics" to imagine, but the attempt to do so would be salutary for us and for others. It must look like a huge jumble of odd and rather frightening things — priests in funny clothes, nuns in funnier clothes, all of them unmarried, vigil lights, confessionals (where God knows what goes on), strange, secret rites in which everything is said in Latin. It must look like a secret society, too. No one will ever tell you anything. Ask a Catholic a simple question and he immediately is on his guard. "You'd better ask a priest," he says, knowing full well that you'd never dare approach one of those mysterious and frightening figures in black.

Rev. J. Killgallon in Guide

The Pope's Private Saint

In three ways, by the Roman synod, by his special canonization of a saint, and by his summoning of an ecumenical council, the Holy Father shows his trust in providence.

FRANCIS X. MURPHY, C.S.S.R.

POPE JOHN XXIII has many reasons for believing in divine providence. Frequently in the course of his career things have happened that he can account for on no other score than the active direction of almighty God. Yet the pontiff is neither superstitious nor psychic. He is not given to seeing visions or hearing voices. He is, rather, a very down to earth individual with a strong sense of faith. But, so at home is he in both this world, and in the supernatural, that he does not hesitate to accept the inspiration of the moment — particularly when he is saying his prayers — to come to an important decision. The man in the street might accuse him of "playing his hunches."

Pope John would laugh at the suggestion. He might even nod in agreement. Only he would immediately maintain that his "hunches" are evidently suggested by his faith. They are dictated by his keen sense of living in the presence of God.

As a case in point is a decision the pope came to, less than three months after his election. On January 24, 1959, in a sermon he delivered in the basilica of St. Paul-outside-the-walls, he took the world by surprise.

Almost casually he announced his intention to summon an ecumenical council, to hold a synod of the diocese of Rome, and to set about revising the Code of Canon Law. Cardinals and clerics in the Church were stupefied. Heretofore, any one of these enterprises had been thought of as a monumental project all by itself. Each one would have required the full resources of one or two long pontificates. And this pope had already passed his seventy-seventh birthday.

A year later, to the day, Pope John celebrated his Roman synod. Almost mischievously, in the Lateran Basilica — which is his cathedral as Bishop of Rome — the pontiff confessed: "Thanks be to God, Venerable Brethren, we can honestly say that something wonderful has happened. It is only a year ago that we spoke of this matter with the eminent cardinals gathered before the tomb of St. Paul. And here we are, this evening, inaugurating our Roman synod!"

The Holy Father seemed to lower his voice. "Let me tell you frankly," he all but whispered, "something that until now we have told to only a few; and that in confidence, as a sacred secret. It was while at our humble prayers, in the intimate simplicity of our heart, that we felt the divine impulse to proclaim an ecumenical council." He had then mentioned this fact to an intimate adviser, only to be given the suggestion that a Roman synod — and even more, a revision of the Code of Canon Law — was a more pressing

necessity. The Holy Father there and then decided to accept both those suggestions. Almost on the spur of the moment, a few weeks later, he seized on the first opportunity to make his startling three-fold announcement.

The competence and dispatch with which the Roman synod was carried out is a clear proof that the pontiff knew exactly what he was about. In a year's time, the eight committees to whom he had confided the revision of the rules governing the diocese of Rome, had put together a code of regulations that are fully modern. They took into consideration the most up-to-date sociological studies. They kept in mind the economic and social conditions of the people, as well as the great progress made within the Church recently in pressing for a modern parochial and liturgical apostolate.

No one knows just when the ecumenical council will be held. But the group of priests and scholars gathering material for the discussions in Rome right now, as well as the Catholic bishops, all over the world, who have had to prepare a list of suggestions and information for the coming council, have no doubt that the pope knows what he is up to. The deadline for the preliminary preparations has already been passed.

What is, in a sense, most startling about Pope John XXIII is the fact that he believes the surest way of making progress — at least in church affairs — is by starting backwards.

He is frequently heard to remark: "It is a good thing to preserve or revive ancient customs." Suiting his actions to his words, he has, from the very first moments of his pontificate, reached back to reinstate many a forgotten papal custom. This explains his desire to return to the system of synods and councils that bind together the vast history of the Church like the steps of a ladder. It is likewise the reason why he is looked upon as such an innovator, particularly in the frequency with which he leaves the Vatican to visit some parish or church or college within the diocese of Rome.

During this past Lent, for example, each Sunday found the pope in a different sector of the suburbs of the city. These parishes, many of them new, or at least greatly expanded, contain the poorer working classes. They have therefore been given particular attention by the Communists. With never so much as a mention of these subversive elements, Pope John arrived in a particular area, walked in procession with the priests and people, and presided at Benediction, for all the world as if he were the bishop of some small town, able to devote all his time to visiting his flock. The effect has been electric.

MORE recently, on the feast of the Ascension, the pontiff fulfilled another dream. The story now making the rounds in Rome is that one day, while still patriarch of Venice, Cardinal Roncalli had been heard to remark: "I would like to be pope for just one day. For I would

immediately canonize Gregory Barbarigo!"

Whether true or not, the story illustrates two facts. Pope John has had a lifelong devotion to this seventeenth century Bishop of Bergamo and Cardinal of Padua who was beatified in 1761. Once elevated to the papacy, the pontiff was determined to push through Barbarigo's cause despite the slowness and intricacy of the normal canonization process.

True to form, Pope John looked to the past for a solution to his problem. He had recourse to a special method of canonization that goes all the way back to the time of Alexander III in the thirteenth century, though it has been used as recently as during the pontificates of Pius XI and Pius XII, for the proclamation of Albert the Great and Margaret of Hungary as saints. The pope dispensed with the long investigation. He likewise waived the requirement of two additional miracles worked through the beatified Cardinal Barbarigo's intercession. Finally he held the ceremony of canonization in the Basilica of St. John Lateran, thus going back two hundred years to the last time such a celebration was conducted outside the Vatican.

The pontiff finally offered a full explanation for the novelty of his procedure. In the sermon which he delivered after declaring the Blessed Gregory a saint, Pope John maintained that it was providential that two hundred years after Gregory's beatification, he was being held up to the contemporary world as a mod-

el of true holiness. For the pope stressed the fact that in the modern world which is so interested in the sciences, and so absorbed by its discoveries of nuclear energy, priests and people need the reassurance that a man can take a great interest in learning and science, in scholarship and culture, and still both live as a saint, and perform the ecclesiastical duties of a great churchman.

Back in St. Peter's that same evening, Pope John gave another talk on St. Gregory. The pontiff began by recalling the man's heroic virtues, his distinguished career as bishop and churchman, and his accomplishments as a scientist, linguist and man of letters. John XXIII outlined four points: 1) the new saint's care for the poor; 2) his catechizing the people; 3) his seminary and clergy; and 4) his great Catholic culture. On all four of these interests it was obvious that he was the object of special veneration on the part of the present pontiff.

Gregory Barbarigo had been born in Venice in 1625. He lost his mother as a child. Hence when he was eighteen, his father had taken him to Westphalia in Germany on a diplomatic mission for the Doge of Venice. Here young Gregory came in contact with a rare assortment of the world's diplomats and statesmen. This explains his knowledge of the world, his interest in languages and science, as well as his awareness of the necessity of reform in the Church. Some years later, he finished his studies at the university of Padua.

Upon taking his degree in law in 1655, at the age of thirty, he put on clerical dress. He was ordained a priest by the Patriarch of Venice at the end of that same year.

Called to Rome in 1656 by Pope Alexander VIII, Gregory Barbarigo performed heroic acts of charity during an epidemic that swept through the poorer sections of Rome known as Trastevere — across the Tiber — the following year. Not only did he provide spiritual aid, but he directed the work of the sanitation groups, organized emergency hospitals and clinics, and provided against the subsequent famine that threatened the whole city. As a reward for such heroism, the pope decided to make him a bishop. He was consecrated in 1657 and sent to the diocese of Bergamo.

Immediately St. Gregory turned his attention to the diocesan seminary as well as to the task of catechizing the children and adults of both town and country. Seven years later, having been made a cardinal in 1660, he was transferred to Padua. Imitating the zeal and efficiency of St. Charles Borromeo, he reformed the Paduan seminary, turning it into a beehive of scholarship and sanctity. Despite the fact that Pope Innocent XI insisted on keeping him in Rome for several years, Cardinal Barbarigo managed not only to keep control of his own diocese of Padua, but to push its priests and people into a vast project for teaching Christian doctrine to all age groups. He conducted a diocesan synod. And he started what we

refer to today as a laymen's retreat league.

Widening his interests, the Cardinal of Padua built a large printing press. He provided it with type not only for books in Latin and Italian, but also for such Oriental languages as Greek, Syriac, Persian and Hebrew. Then he forced his own scholars, and particularly his seminary professors, to take an interest in these languages. He insisted on their usefulness not only for the study of the Sacred Scriptures; but also as a preparation for eventual reunion between the Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches. Dying in 1697, at the age of seventy-two, St. Gregory had thus left behind him a record for things accomplished, as well as a reputation for holiness, that has since been the boast of the Church in northern Italy.

IT NEEDS but little knowledge of the interests as well as of the career of Angelo Roncalli to understand why, as Pope John XXIII, he was so anxious to raise this man to the altars of the Church universal, as a "modern" saint. Not only had Angelo Roncalli heard of the marvelous bishop of Bergamo, Blessed Gregory Barbarigo, while still a boy and a young student; but as a seminary professor, and as secretary to his own bishop in Bergamo before World War I, Father Roncalli was able to follow the man's career and see for himself the long-lasting results of his activities in his home diocese.

The present pope's zealous belief in the usefulness of diocesan synods

—he was actually correcting the page proofs of the synod he had held in Venice, when summoned to the papal conclave whence he emerged pope in 1958 — was based in good part on what he knew had been accomplished by St. Charles Borromeo and the Blessed Gregory Barbarigo through these reform gatherings. Finally, the cultural interests of Angelo Roncalli as linguist, man of letters, diplomat and man of affairs, all find an echo in the achievements of St. Gregory Barbarigo.

The pontiff said it was providential that he had been given the opportunity to canonize this Venetian cardinal. He made it plain that there is nothing coincidental about the similarity of interests between the saint and the pope. Despite the difference in the way their careers developed, Angelo Roncalli had long modeled his activities on those of his seventeenth century patron. As Pope John XXIII, he makes no secret of the fact that he himself lives a double life. While very much a part of what is going on in the world about him, he is equally sensitive to the inspirations of divine providence which, his faith assures him, are also all round about him. At seventy-eight he talks and acts as though he fully intends — again under the guidance of divine providence — to make the most of both worlds for a considerable time to come. Long may he reign!

You will never stumble on anything good while sitting down.

Franciscan Message

Problems of Professional People



Duties of the Druggist

PROBLEM: I am a student in a school of pharmacy, and expect to complete my course in another year. Will you please explain the Catholic principles regarding the chief duties of a druggist?

SOLUTION: Since this question demands a lengthy answer, it is best to devote several successive articles to the consideration of the moral problems which a pharmacist is likely to encounter, with the application of Catholic principles toward the solution of these problems. This is the first of these articles.

The most important problem for the druggist today concerns the sale of contraceptives, whether mechanical or chemical. At the present time the amount of such devices for violating God's law sold throughout the United States is astounding. It is calculated that about two billion dollars are spent annually by the American people on contraceptives. The usual retail dealer is the druggist.

Is a drugstore owner allowed to retain and to sell contraceptives to all persons who wish to purchase them? The unanimous reply of all Catholic theologians is a definite: No. And they unhesitatingly declare that to do so is a mortal sin, even though otherwise the

druggist would have to go out of business (in reference to this last point, it has been proved in many instances that a pharmacist who staunchly refuses to sell contraceptives usually makes out very well financially).

What is the reason for this stand? A Catholic druggist might argue that many of those who seek to purchase contraceptives are non-Catholics, sincerely convinced that contraception is not sinful. What wrong, then, does he commit by selling them such drugs or instruments? The answer is that contraception is against the law of God, not merely against the law of the Catholic Church. Hence, *objectively* it is a grave sin, even when the person who practices it does not realize this, and thus is not guilty of sin *subjectively*. Now, to help another toward the commission of what one knows to be a grave violation of God's law (even when it is not subjectively a sin for the one who commits it) in so immediate a way as does the druggist who directly provides the means of sin, is a serious sin of material co-operation, which cannot be excused, even though otherwise the druggist must endure grave financial loss.

In addition to the sin of co-operation, there is a serious sin of scandal in the case of a Catholic drugstore owner. For when people realize that a Catholic pharmacist, a man of high reputation in the community, does not hesitate to sell objects which his Church condemns as means of committing

grave sin, they will conceive a low estimate of the Catholic religion whose members act so inconsistently with their faith when money is at stake.

The matter is somewhat different with a clerk in the drugstore. His co-operation toward the sins that will be committed is much more remote than that of the owner. He has no authority to determine what shall be sold or not sold. Hence, if he cannot get a position in a store where these objectionable articles are not sold, he can retain his job in a store where he is expected to sell contraceptives. But even in this event, he should try, if possible, to be excused from this particular task. The manager of a chain-store, obliged to follow the policies of the owner, may stock and sell contraceptives, if he is commanded to do so. His co-operation in such an event is sufficiently remote to be justified by his need to earn a living comparable to his abilities and experience. Moreover, scandal is not so readily given

when people realize that such a person is only an agent or a middleman.

We have been speaking of those drugs and implements that are intended exclusively for contraceptive purposes. For there are some drugs in recent times (such as progesterone drugs) which can be used for good medical purposes, even though they can also be used as contraceptives. A druggist may with a safe conscience sell drugs of this latter class; and he need not ask each customer whether he intends to use the drug for good or evil purposes, just as a liquor dealer need not inquire of each customer whether he intends to use the beverage he wishes to purchase in order to get drunk. But those objects which normally have no other use than contraception must be absolutely excluded from a drugstore owned by a Catholic, if he wishes to live up to the teaching of his Catholic faith.

Very Rev. Francis J. Connell,
C.S.S.R., S.T.D., LL.D., L.H.D.
The Catholic University of America

IT'S 5720 IN ISRAEL

This, in our reckoning, is the year 1960 A. D. or "Anno Domini," which means in the year of our Lord. But other people reckon differently.

In Moslem countries it is the year 1379. Their calendar begins from the time of the Hegira, when Mohammed fled from Mecca to Medina.

In India it is officially the year 1882 of the Saka era. In Abyssinia and those parts of Egypt which observe the Coptic Calendar it is 1676.

It is the year 5720 in Israel. The Jews reckon their years from the era of the Creation. This, they maintain, occurred in the autumn of what the Christians calculate to be the year 3760 B. C. That is why the Jewish New Year always falls in the autumn.

And, lastly, in Japan this is Showa 35. Except that the Japanese number their years in epochs, their calendar is identical with ours. Each epoch begins with the accession of an Emperor.

Irish Digest

SIDEBLANCES

"Pioneering" Against the Evils of Drink

By the Bystander

AN organization that can do much in the United States to curb the evils of excessive drinking is that which was founded in Ireland in the year 1898 called "The Pioneers," or, in its fuller title, "The Total Abstinence Association of the Sacred Heart." It is reliably said that there are 7,000,000 excessive drinkers in the U.S., of whom 3,000,000 are complete alcoholics. Probably many more millions not recognized in these statistics would have to admit to themselves that they drink much more than is good for them, physically, mentally and spiritually. Any movement or organization that has proved itself to be a successful means of reducing the toll of ruin to individuals and families resulting from excessive drinking, needs the fullest attention and support in America. The Pioneers are such an organization.

The Pioneers came into being under the initiative and inspiration of Father James Cullen, S.J., in the city of Dublin, Ireland, in the year 1898. Over 60 years before, Father Theobald Matthew had made history in Ireland with his total abstinence campaign

which had counted tens of thousands of loyal followers. Father Matthew's work, though its influence diminished somewhat during half a century, prepared the way for Father Cullen's. With four ardent volunteers, meeting at St. Francis Xavier Center in Dublin, he launched his organization. Today it has over 520,000 members, the majority in Ireland but many in other countries of the world.

The Pioneers are not, like Alcoholics Anonymous, a rescue movement, seeking to give first aid to alcoholics or to guide them to rehabilitation. While members are urged to do what they can for down and out alcoholics, their primary purposes may be said to be atonement for sins of drunkenness and the prevention of such sins. Neither is the organization in any way tinged with puritanical notions that alcohol is an evil in itself. In all the literature of the Pioneers, the point is stressed that alcoholic beverages are not to be considered an evil thing; rather, the abuse of this good thing, so widespread today, calls for reparation and preventive measures. While the full-fledged Pioneer

takes a total abstinence pledge for life, the organization has a "temporary abstinence section" which persons may join who are willing to take a pledge for only a year or a few years. There is also a juvenile section which encourages young people still in school to pledge abstinence for the same motives that inspire adult Pioneers.

It is the motive force behind the total abstinence pledge of the Pioneers that makes it appeal to its hundreds of thousands of members. The entire movement is under the patronage of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and each member makes his pledge as an act of love and reparation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. These are the words with which a candidate, having been tried and proven, promises total abstinence for life: "For Thy greater glory and consolation, O Sacred Heart of Jesus, for Thy sake to give good example, to practice self-denial, to make reparation to Thee for the sins of intemperance, and for the conversion of excessive drinkers, I will abstain for life from all intoxicating drinks." This has come to be called "The Heroic Offering," the phrase itself indicating that great courage and fortitude and love of Christ are expected of those who decide to become Pioneers.

Rigid rules for accepting members are binding on all councils of the Pioneers. These rules prove what has been said above, that this

is not a rescue movement, nor a haven for the shelter of those who have just reached the desire to escape hang-overs. It is an organization of reparation and prevention, based on the solid motive of the love of Christ. Hence these rules: 1) Only those who are over 16 years of age may be accepted as Pioneers; 2) Only those who have taken no alcoholic drink for two years are eligible for membership; 3) Only those whose integrity and honesty are known and certified by other members, or who are recommended by priests or religious, will be accepted as members. Persons who have taken alcoholic drinks, even in the greatest moderation, within the two year period previous to application for membership, are never under any circumstances admitted to the rank of Pioneers. They may be accepted as probationers, if they are found suitable for this section, but only after they have passed two full years without taking any alcoholic drink can they be permitted to become Pioneers. If a Pioneer has the misfortune to break his pledge by taking any kind of alcoholic drink, he thereby excludes himself from the organization, is required to turn in emblems and badges of membership, and his name is stricken from the rolls.

A very important feature of the Pioneers is the emblem that each member must wear at all times. This is a specially designed image of the Sacred Heart surmounted

by a cross, to be worn outside the clothing where all may see it. Thus, wherever a Pioneer goes, he (or she) is recognized by this emblem, and is proclaiming to all that he has made the heroic offering to atone for sins of drunkenness. At almost any social gathering in Ireland one will almost certainly see some persons wearing the Pioneer emblem and proving to all around them that one can have a wonderful time without the spurious aid of alcoholic beverages.

IN THE United States, where a movement of this kind is probably more needed than any-

where else in the world, the Pioneers have as yet only a few scattered footholds. Any persons or groups of persons who may be interested in giving practical expression to their own love of the Sacred Heart and their desire to atone for and prevent sins of drunkenness through the means adopted by the Pioneers, may write for information about setting up councils to Rev. Joseph James Burns, Queen of Angels Rectory, 44-04 Skillman Ave., Long Island City, 4, New York. The first American rally to promote the Pioneer movement will be held on September 18, 1960, at Mount St. Michael's in the Bronx, New York City.

LABOR DAY THOUGHT

Labor and management, having become unduly suspicious and distrustful of one another's motives, are being strongly tempted to rely on economic force and political pressure and on public relations stratagems and propaganda gimmicks as a substitute for good-faith collective bargaining and labor-management cooperation. If any substantial number of employers and labor leaders succumb to this temptation and become cynical or disillusioned, they will live to rue the day. Cynicism in any field of human relations is a negative and destructive force. If permitted to go unchecked in the crucial area of industrial relations, it will cancel out much of the progress which has been made in recent years and will almost certainly compel the government, under any political administration, to discipline labor and management more severely than ever before and to assume more and more responsibility — ultimately too much responsibility from the point of view of sound social ethics — for the orderly and successful operation of our national economy. This would be a calamity not only for labor and management, but for all the people of the United States, whose economic welfare and political freedom so largely depend on the successful functioning of our industrial relations system in an atmosphere of voluntary labor-management cooperation.

NCWC Labor Day Statement, 1959

readers retort



In which readers are invited to express their minds on articles and opinions published in *The Liguorian*. Letters must be signed and full address of the writer must be given, though city and name will be withheld from publication on request.

Catholic President

Regarding the tremendous article by K.R.U. in the June issue entitled: "A Catholic President," this is what the average non-Catholic wants to know: Could a Catholic president make his own decisions, or would he have to follow the Church? Suppose his advisers would present him with overwhelming evidence that without birth control there would be unemployment, starvation and strife. Suppose they told him that integration would lead to strife and anguish. Suppose it seemed clear that giving aid to Catholic schools would cause dissension and even violence. He might be inclined to agree with his advisers, and in that case would he be able to follow his convictions, or would he have to follow the official Church line?

Florida

M. S.

• *Taking these points in reverse order, as to government aid to parochial schools, this is by no means part of the official teaching of the Church. There are indeed some Catholics who feel it would be inadvisable to take such aid even if offered. A Catholic president would have no "official line" to go on in this regard. As to integration, the Constitution long ago settled this problem and established the "official line" for presidents no matter what their religion. A president must stand for equal*

rights for all citizens. As to practical enforcement of this law, he can only act with what prudence and wisdom might be his. As to the highly hypothetical "birth control law," a Catholic president could not of course compromise his conscience and state that wrong was right. But if the Congress passed such a law despite his disapproval, it would not be the first time such a thing has happened in American politics. To sum up, we have a Constitution in this country which guarantees freedom for all. A Catholic president would be bound to observe and enforce this as well as anyone else, nor would his religion interfere with his doing so.

The editors

I have just finished reading "A Catholic President," and would like to approach the same conclusion from another viewpoint. The fact that everyone seems to be trying to separate a man's religion from his political beliefs has worried me a great deal. If I were a candidate for president and if I were a good Catholic, these two facts could not be separated. How could a good Catholic ignore for a minute the sick, the aged, the children of the world? How could he give a halfhearted answer on the segregation problem? How could he take graft in any form? How could he do anything cruel, evil or disloyal,

and still be a good Catholic? What the American people should be sure of before voting for anyone is that his behaviour and his convictions match up. Then it must follow that he will be a good president.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

Y. M.

Catholic Freedom?

The June issue of THE LIGUORIAN carried an article by Father F. J. Connell entitled The Catholic Politician and the Catholic Church. This subject has been puzzling me for some time. Is there a difference between the Church's stand on freedom of religion in such countries as Italy and Spain on one side, and the United States on the other? Suppose Catholics increased in numbers so that they constituted 70 per cent of the population. Would there be substantial changes in the political structure of our nation that a Catholic politician would have to work for?

Illinois

J. L.

• *The Church has always held that the right of the individual to follow his conscience is basic and fundamental. Not only is this a right, but it is a duty for every individual. If, however, in exercising that right, the individual endangers public order and the peace of a community, the civil officials have a right and a duty to limit the individual right for the sake of the common good. In Italy and Spain, overwhelmingly Catholic nations, the civil authorities apparently have felt that such a judgment was justified in regard to certain sects because of their inflammatory and insulting attacks on Catholic beliefs. The political structure of the United States is entirely different from that of Italy and Spain. The Constitution guarantees freedom for all, and the U. S. bishops have officially and repeatedly declared that the*

Church is well content with her status under the Constitution, and can envisage no situation in which the Church would have any desire to change the guarantees of freedom for all which the Constitution enshrines.

The editors

Dull Sermons

I got a big kick out of the reference to begonias in the June issue "How To Listen to a Dull Sermon." Sometimes I think that one reason for resenting dull sermons is self-pride on the part of the listener. The impatience one feels at seeing a job bungled, and the irritation of thinking "I could do better than that myself." At least I suspect this may play a part in my own reaction to dull and inept sermons. I agree with the theme of the article that by dint of close attention and great effort it might be possible to dig something of value out of even the dullest discourse. But sometimes the effort is so great and the return so slight that it seems out of all proportion. Maybe I am wrong, but when I find myself faced with a speaker who is so hopelessly boring that my skin starts to crawl, I offer my discomfort to God, and try to channel it into prayers for the speaker to overcome whatever faults of delivery may be hampering his communication with the people he is striving to reach. Your article wants me to accept a dull speaker and listen to him no matter how I feel. Well, I'll try it next time we have an inept guest preacher. (One reason I am spoiled; all our regular priests preach excellent sermons!) But if I find the same old fingernails-scratching-glass sensation up and down my back, I suspect I'll go back to my technique of blacking it out with charitable Hail Mary's.

Seattle, Wash.

G. M. C.

I would like to express appreciation for your fine article on "How To Listen to a Dull Sermon." The author dealt with a very practical, down-to-earth problem, and in a most enjoyable manner. I only hope that other readers benefited as much as I did. Keep up the fine work.
Detroit, Mich.

J. M.

Woman's Page?

God bless Father Kreuzer, author of *Did Christ Laugh?* Long may he reign in the laughing corner. He was made to order for folks like me, who are weighted down with remorse half the time, yet the other half we must bubble or die. And he is right; Jesus must have laughed at times, watching the mumblings and bumbblings of humans. Father Lee's tender teaching little saint stories I don't want to miss. I'd sit my sons down to listen, except they're high school age and over. I'd save them for my future grandchildren, but I think *THE LIGUORIAN* is so good it ought to be passed on, and that I do. How about his stories compiled into book form? Here's a potential buyer. I still think you should have a woman's page.

Michigan

Mrs. H. J.

Racial Tension and Real Estate

Many thanks for your fine article, "Raw Race Prejudice." The only error is in sympathizing with those "who have to face economic losses in racially changing neighborhoods." The sympathy is good but misdirected. The "panic-sale" real estate practice is a dishonest swindle; and worse, it causes racial tensions to increase by the false fear of loss aroused. I am a former real estate salesman.

California

V. H. M.

• *The real estate dealers who use panic motives for moving people must bear*

much responsibility for racial tensions. These are not representative of the better class of realtor, but the harm they do is vastly greater than their numbers.

The editors

It was by chance that I found out about your magazine. I was rummaging through a township dump when I glanced upon the half-burned remnants of a copy of *THE LIGUORIAN*. At once I saw it contained religious material, and I read as much of it as possible. It is apparently a Catholic publication and it is very good reading. I am not a Catholic nor do I belong to any other religious group. I am just an old celibate, a social outcast, struggling with life in this bedeviled world. Now I was wondering if I could subscribe to your publication. I do not read newspapers or secular magazines because of their power to distort a person's mind and draw it away from the things of purity to the lustful desires of a carnal mind, and so I hunger for reading material. If I am eligible, please let me know the subscription price. Thank you!

Wisconsin

Mr. J. L.

• *A complimentary subscription has been entered in our files in the name of the writer of the above letter.*

The editors

Back to God

This is the first time in my life that I have written to a magazine. I could not resist the urge to write and tell you something that will always remain in my heart. It's because of you and your wonderful work in getting people to see the real meaning of life—a life with God after our life on earth is over. I am twenty years old, a secretary in a public school. I have a boy friend, a truly devoted Catholic, whom I not

only love very much, but admire. We have known each other since we were children. Even when we were very young children we said we would some day get married. And then, in high school years, things started to change. He went to a Catholic high school, and I went to a public high school. I became careless and eventually I fell away from my religion. My boy friend tried talking to me about it over and over again, but somehow, perhaps because of indifference, I never really listened to him. I never went to church except on Christmas and Easter. We hardly saw each other after high school and we seemed to drift apart — although nothing changed in our feelings. He still wants to marry me to this day, and I'll never know why. Because of lack of money, we'll have to wait a few years. But even if we have to wait until we are twenty-five it will be all the better for us, because then we will be able to know better the true responsibilities of marriage. Recently my boy friend found out that his mother is going to die of cancer. I have never seen anyone with so much faith as he has. I mean this so much. Why? Because he is close to God. He knows what it means to have faith in God and in his religion. That is something I had to learn. When I saw how he accepted the illness of his mother, I started thinking — finally! Night after night I would sit in my room and think about why I am here on earth and what I can do to make my life worthwhile — besides just working day after day. I started reading all the back copies of THE LIGUORIAN — this time *really reading* them. I couldn't hold back the tears, for I realized that I was the "careless Catholic" you've been writing about: the one who claims she's a Catholic, but doesn't even go to church. I went to church that week, and at first I sat

there thinking about all the time I wasted forgetting about God and not thanking Him for all the things He has given me. I realized then that there just can't be any real happiness in life without God. I hope my letter will help someone. From the bottom of my heart I tell you that I am indebted to those wonderful, wonderful LIGUORIANS. I thank God for the wonderful boy He selected for me, because along with you he brought me straight back to God.

New York

Miss J. T.

Ham Operators

I am compiling a catalog of Catholic priest and religious "Hams" (Amateur Radio Operators). I would appreciate it if you would mention this in your correspondence columns. All priests or religious in this field are asked to send their name, call number (license number), and any other pertinent information to Fr. Jogues Chiocco, O.F.M.Cap. KINGR, St. Anthony Friary, Lowell Road, Hudson, New Hampshire.

Who Is Head?

I expected to see a lot of letters in your Readers Retort about your article on the faults of husbands. Since there have been none, I'm constrained to put in my word. The basic error in the whole article is that it fails to recognize the husband's role as head of the household. According to your words, he has absolutely no prerogatives. He may do nothing without first talking it over with his wife. This is nonsense. I agree that your article brings up many valid points about the faults of husbands, but your whole assumption is wrong, that the wife is the equal of the husband and that complete agreement and "togetherness" are normal. This is unrealistic, impractical, unnatural, and not in accord with the teachings of the

Church. The addition of a few lines would make a big difference. You rightly castigate the miserly husband, but you should preface this by saying that "the husband is ultimately responsible for the family finances and must have the final say in all major expenditures." When you talk about husbands' unreasonableness about sex, you should insert the words, "nature assigns the role of aggressor to the husband in marriage relations, and he alone should determine the time and frequency of the act." The most ridiculous statement in the whole article is that a husband is obliged to help his wife whenever he can. I'm not obligated to do my wife's work any more than she is obligated to do mine.

Michigan

J. P. F.

• *Before this letter was received, we had completed an article under the title, "Who is the Head of the Family?" which appeared in THE LIGUORIAN recently. It restates the teaching of the Bible and the natural law that the man is the head of the family, but the explanation of what this means will probably make the above correspondent more furious than he already is. For example, we said that "a husband must not be unreasonable in regard to sex." This husband apparently maintains that he has a perfect right to be unreasonable in regard to sex or anything else, because he is the boss. Can such nonsense be topped?*

The editors

Fatal Choice

The letter from the woman who said she obtained permission of a priest to practice contraception prompts this reply. She is not the only one who falsely quotes a priest in defense of her sins. It is shocking to me, a convert, that there are so many cradle Catholics who talk themselves into this grave sin,

and who brag about it. You cannot repeat the truth too often, even though, alas, many of those who need it most refuse to read magazines like yours. As for me, I would far rather die having my fifth baby than commit a mortal sin.

Illinois

Mrs. N. B.

• *There, good readers, is one difference between the good Catholic and the bad. The former says: "I would rather die than commit a single mortal sin." The latter says: "I would rather commit a hundred mortal sins than have another baby."*

The editors

Co-ed Distractions

You have carried several articles on the fact that the Church takes a strong position against co-education whenever separate schools are possible. Even many of your lay readers have expressed strong views against co-education. Despite all this talk most of our schools remain co-educational even when it could be otherwise. What puzzles me especially is why our Catholic school authorities insist on mixing up boys and girls indiscriminately in the same classroom. My young son in grade school had to put up a whole year with a girl in front of him who kept glamorously swishing her ponytail across his desk. (I told him to take a scissors to school and cut it off.) Next came a girl in the bench behind him with limpid black eyes who looked at him adoringly every time he turned around. She fell madly in love with him (this in grade school) because he helped her with her work. When a parent has such problems in grade school, what must it be like in co-educational high schools? No wonder there are so many immature marriages.

Windsor, Ontario

Anon

• *A good point well taken. Maybe just the mention of it here will give thought*

to some who are in a position to make co-education even in grade school less a problem by not treating children as if they were sexless.

The editors

• The arguments your correspondents present in favor of separate schools seem somewhat shallow to me. They need to be reminded that there is much virtue and dedication (on the part of both students and teachers) in Catholic co-educational schools. I have had experience in both types of schools and am in a position to know. If God sends me children I shall send them to Catholic separate schools, not because I am convinced that the opposite sex is an insufferable distraction or an insurmountable temptation, but because Holy Mother the Church advises that, in separate schools, children are more completely educated for the service of God and mankind.

New Jersey

Mrs. L. M. W.

• *The question of separate schools vs. co-educational schools (for high school students) is not one of something totally good vs. something totally bad. If co-educational schools were totally bad, Pope Pius XII would not even have tolerated them under certain conditions and safeguards, as he did. It is a question of something that may be good vs. something that is far better. Boys and girls do not have to be "insufferable distractions" or "insurmountable temptations" to one another (though sometimes they really are) to make it vastly less easy to get a thorough education in the same classroom than in separate classrooms or schools.*

The editors

Lay Teachers

I wish to commend your magazine on its appealing and instructive articles, especially on moral issues. However, I

wish to argue with you on a recent reference to vocations to the religious life and the Catholic school system. It is deplorable that there are not enough vocations, but I think this lack can largely be traced back to religious themselves. Having taught for many years in a Catholic boys' school, I found that many problems which should have been taken up with the priests were laid at the feet of the laymen on the staff because the boys did not seem to put much faith or trust in the advice of the religious. I know that this is wrong. But at the same time, I know many qualified Catholic teachers who would rather teach in public schools than in Catholic. I am one of them. In the Catholic school I seemed to be only endured as a necessary evil, to be done away with at a later date. In the public school I am fully accepted. It is time for our Catholic school system to come of age.

Kansas

P. A. M.

• *It is almost inevitable that, since the Catholic school system in the U. S. was built up entirely around the teaching of priests and religious, there should be some feeling manifest that the lay teachers who have had to be added to the system are tolerated rather than fully accepted. However, this is rapidly changing in many areas. Religious teachers should indeed examine themselves as to whether their pupils lack confidence in them, and would rather take their problems to a layman than to them. We salute the good Catholic lay teachers who are doing marvelous work both in Catholic and public schools.*

The editors

Kind Words

I have been taking THE LIGUORIAN for nearly a year now, and I thoroughly enjoy it. I hope some day I will be able to get my husband to read it!

La.

V. M. F.

Highway to Heaven

FROM ten at night until six in the morning the thoroughfare that runs in front of our rectory is Big Truck Boulevard. One night the big trucks were whizzing by so steadily, booming so heavily under the window that I couldn't sleep. Since it was impossible to quiet the trucks and unchristian to curse them, I just lay there thinking about them; and the first thing you know it seemed they were preaching a sermon to me!

Here they were, these trucks, huge battleships of the road; grey or green or brilliant red, outlined with amber bulbs, rumbling along with all sorts of loads: milk or oil or furniture; pair after pair of headlights like shining yellow eyes, zooming on through the night with a sullen roar, riding eventually into the pink dawn, then highballing along other highways under blue skies and into a far-off flaming sunset. I suppose if you look hard

enough, you can see adventure and romance even in hub caps and grease.

Curious thing, though, about a truck: the bigger part of it (almost as in a human being) they call the body. But the other part, the more important part, is the cab. Almost like the soul. Because there, in the cab, is what you might call its principle of life, the motor—what makes the truck go, and without which the truck would be as motionless as a corpse. And in that cab turns your steering wheel, like free will. You can drive right, drive left, even drive off the road — but you take the consequences. Isn't that what free will means? And right beyond the steering wheel glows the speedometer, just as plain as conscience itself, registering, reminding you when you are overstepping bounds.

When a truck starts to climb a hill, it seems almost human, the way it grinds and grunts and inches slowly up, like a man with bent head and drooping shoulders plodding up the slope of trouble. "For the heart of a man is a heavy load for a man to bear alone." But how simple and easy it is for truck or man to go roaring downhill! It may take a man sixty years to become a saint, but he can land at the bottom of Skid Row in only six months. It all depends on

Adapted from a Catholic Hour radio address by

Joseph E. Manton, C.S.S.R.

who is in control, the soul or the body.

Put the truck on as high a hill as you like. Then up in the cab, shut off the motor and release the brake. The body of the truck, always eager to throw its weight around, will exert its pressure and force the whole vehicle down, faster and faster.

It is no different in a man's moral life. The body, left to itself and all brakes off, has a natural inclination to go downhill; and if you let it, the end must be a wild, careening ride and a shattered moral wreck.

Nobody knows this better than the fellow who thought he knew how far he could go, how far he could let his emotions and desires coast along before it would be really dangerous and things got out of control. Just let passion get rolling a little bit, and it picks up fearful momentum. And the only sure way of stopping it is never to let it get started. You are not a beast; you are a man; and the control should be in the cab, in the human soul with its conscience and its will power and its moral code.

When you counsel modesty and purity to young people they think these are the steel bars of a jail shutting them off from happiness. They may be steel bars, all right, but they are the steel handrails on a bridge, that perilous bridge that swings between youth and maturity, and only those know how necessary they are who have fallen off and lie at the bottom, bruised and broken. Or, to get back to trucks, aren't some trucks simply marked "Flammable?"

Most trucking jobs are long hauls over the highway toward the horizon, and you could hardly get a better picture, a sharper modern parable of a man journeying toward eternity than the driver in the cab of his truck as he rolls along the grey stretch of road toward his far-off, unseen destination. The little sign on the windshield says, "No Riders," and in the cab of his own soul every man rides alone. Nobody else has the responsibility for *you*. You ride alone.

Every driver has basically the same obligation. It doesn't matter what kind of cargo the truck is carrying, whether it is Christmas trees or brand new cars — the idea is always to get to your destination and bring what they expect. Isn't it the same way on the highway of life? Whether you are the conductor of a subway car or the conductor of a symphony orchestra, the whole idea is so to do your work, so to live your life that you will be doing what God wants and eventually reach your journey's end, heaven.

ASK the average truck driver what are his thoughts as he sits behind the wheel, and you find the one, constant, overpowering thought is just to get where he is going. What he passes along the way is of very minor consideration. Enchanting scenery, eye-catching billboards, famous landmarks — these he goes wheeling past with hardly a glance. They are on his route, but he is on his way! His eyes are focused on the road, his thoughts fixed on the goal. All the rest is trivial. The only thing

that matters is to reach the right address and deliver the goods, intact and unspoiled.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could be like that in our lives, *passing through* this world but making our main concern *the end* of it all, God and heaven and salvation? By the same yardstick wouldn't we be pitifully foolish to let something along the road so distract us, take up our attention, fascinate us — something like money or sex or hate or ambition or any mere creature — so that before we know it, our eyes have wandered off the road, and maybe at that very moment we go hurtling off the sharp, wild curve of sudden death into the wrong eternity?

Sometimes for a truck driver, danger leaps up from the very opposite source. I mean he is looking at the road so long and so steadily that after awhile he doesn't really see the road. They call it highway hypnosis. Here's a competent driver with a good night's sleep behind him on an open highway with a perfect view and no mechanical trouble, and he suddenly goes crashing off the road to disaster. The best explanation seems to be that the grey monotony of the road lulled him, hypnotized him, drugged him into a kind of trance, and before he knew it, the wheel loosened in his grip — just for a couple of moments — and he went roaring to destruction.

It's sad, but aren't there plenty of people like that spiritually? Year after year they stolidly, languidly follow the road of life, hardly realizing what it is all about. Day in, day out

they drift along the same dull round of duties, automatically, mechanically, almost in a daze. Their eyes are blank, their soul is numb, their heart is wooden, their spirit dried up, dead. Theirs? This is a danger to any of us! From time to time we all have to stir ourselves, rouse ourselves, make ourselves sharply aware that we are *on the road to eternity*, that we carry a precious cargo (our very salvation), and that there are dangers all about us! Remind ourselves that life is more than typing letters or driving nails or cooking meals or filling gas tanks! We are the children of God, on the way home to our Father Who is in heaven — and all these material things are but as steps on the stairs as we go up to Him! Life is a prosaic, boring journey only to those that forget God is the goal.

And, like the truck drivers, we had better take no chances along the way. It may surprise you to know that the most cautious of all drivers (except perhaps the men who pilot the schoolbus) are the broad-shouldered boys behind the big steering wheel of a truck. Haven't you ever noticed, for example, how on a dark afternoon or a foggy morning a truck will drone along all lit up like a theatre marquee? They take no chances. Haven't you often heard how a truck driver who feels himself growing drowsy will immediately pull over to the side of the road for a few minutes of exercise or even sleep? They take no chances. If it is a question of a risky road, or a longer road, they unhesitatingly swing off on the longer. They take no chances. Certain

roads they have to keep off altogether: "Trucks Not Allowed."

It might be well for us if mentally we pictured certain books or plays or places as marked with the warning sign: "Decent People Not Allowed." The trucks are forbidden because with their tonnage they would ruin certain thoroughfares. We ought to keep off the *dirt roads* of literature and entertainment because they can ruin us — or at least spatter us with mire, or in some moral mudhole bog us down.

I HAVE heard from salesmen who drive long hours to cover their broad territories that truck drivers are not only the most careful drivers on the road, but also the most courteous and considerate. Many a motorist broken down in the middle of nowhere with nothing but bleak miles of highway stretching away on either side, has found in the truck driver a huge grimy angel who somehow got

him started again. When you are lost, a truck driver really seems *willing* to show you the way. When bright beams meet on a midnight road, the truck (which could play the role of bully), as a rule, is the first to click the switch and dim the lights. And, if there is any danger ahead or any trouble the truck will always blink you a warning.

Isn't it all a heart-warming, practical, modern example of kindness to our neighbor as we move along the road of life, and meet opportunities every day? Doesn't it accent the fact that in this breathless age we have plenty of intellectual brilliance and industrial genius and executive skill — only the men tend to become like their own machines, polished, efficient, impersonal as steel, without heart or soul. We have too many clever people; what we need are kind people, good people.

And the truck driver is the modern Good Samaritan of the road!

TO BE A CATHOLIC

To be a Catholic is to be concerned for the whole Church, for the whole world. We have to develop Catholic minds — not worldly minds with a few Catholic patches — and truly Catholic hearts. Any spirituality must be Catholic first of all; and so must any apostolate.

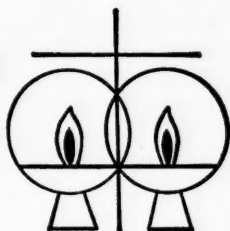
To be a Catholic is to accept the differences of others, and to understand them; this demands a great deal of humility and broadness of outlook.

To be a Catholic is to enrich oneself with the difference of others. Every man is our superior in some way, and it is up to us to discover this wealth and profit by it.

To be a Catholic, finally, is to be fully personal, is to develop our gifts of nature and grace, so as to love, serve and develop the Church's Catholicism.

Cardinal Gracias quoted in Act

FOR WIVES AND HUSBANDS ONLY



Moral Dangers of Rhythm

Donald F. Miller, C.S.S.R.

PROBLEM: The subject of rhythm was discussed in one of your articles some months ago. It was mentioned in the article that, while rhythm is permissible for certain reasons, there are dangers of falling into sin connected with it that husband and wife must be on guard against. Could you please explain what these dangers of sin are in a specific way? I do not doubt what you say; I simply do not know what those dangers of sin are.

SOLUTION: There are three specific dangers of sin that a husband and wife who, for sufficient reasons, elect to practice rhythm for a certain period of time, must be conscious of and must make sure to avoid while they are practicing rhythm.

The first is that periodic continence may turn out to be too much of a strain for one of the partners, so that, during the times when marriage relations must be foregone, that partner will find himself (or herself) falling into sins against the sixth commandment. Such sins would be any kind of sexual indulgence outside of proper marriage relations, alone or with others. In agreeing on the practice of rhythm, the law of charity demands that each partner be concerned about its repercussions on the other. Each must encourage the other to daily prayer, frequent reception of the sacraments, and avoidance

of unnecessary occasions of sin so that continence when required will be made as easy as possible.

The second danger is similar to the first but should be mentioned specifically. It is that, while both agree to use their marriage rights properly only during the ascertained sterile periods, they may be tempted too strongly to use their rights in an improper or contraceptive manner during the fertile period. If experience proves that they fall into this sin quite regularly because of the restrictions imposed by rhythm, then they should not make a pretense of following the rhythm system at all.

The third danger is that, once a married couple have agreed on practicing rhythm for a certain length of time, one partner will insist on making this agreement unbreakable, and, contrary to the express or tacit wishes of the other, insist that the agreement never be changed or withdrawn. A voluntary agreement to practice rhythm for sufficient reasons does not destroy the basic contract of marriage, which requires both partners to submit to the reasonable requests of the spouse for the privilege of marriage. Thus a wife may not rightly say, after her husband has gone along with rhythm for some

months or a year or two, and now wants to give it up: "You promised to practice rhythm and I have a right to hold you to that promise forever, or as long as I wish." That would be contrary to the fully mutual and voluntary agreement that is required for the practice of rhythm even when there are

some reasons for it that appeal more to the one than to the other.

When a question arises in the mind of one partner as to whether the request of the other to give up rhythm is reasonable or unreasonable, then a confessor should be consulted for advice and guidance.

AT THE PREFACE

"It is truly meet and just. . . . AT ALL TIMES. . . . To give thanks"

Teach me, Lord, to live this prayer,

That I may thank Thee every day

For EVERYTHING.

I do at times give thanks for what SEEMS good:

For health, success; for love and gain;

For all that pleases self.

And yet, how thoughtless — blind —

To thank Thee not for what is truly good:

For pain, unkindness, censure, blame;

For every hurt that comes

From persons, place or work.

By these keen instruments wouldst Thou

Divine Physician,

Remove the harmful growth of self,

To give new life; Thine own true life,

And peace — abundantly.

But I am blind — see not Thy loving Hand;

Then in resisting, suffer more

And spoil Thy work.

Had I accepted all with gratitude

I might long since have been a saint,

And happy

(A grateful heart cannot be otherwise).

Forgive, then, Lord,

My blindness and my squandered life,

And give me grace this day to see

Thy chastening Hand in all my hurts

(Nor blame Thy instruments);

The grace to take each purifying cross,

And then —

Give THANKS with all my heart.

F.D.M.

FEATURE LETTER

Working for a Halo!

Dear Fathers:

After reading some of the letters to the editor in *THE LIGUORIAN* during the past few months, I am convinced that I am an oddball, because 1) I admire, respect and revere priests without harping on some picayune faults some rare priests may display; 2) I think nuns and Catholic schools are superlative; 3) I don't want to cancel my subscription in the near future, because your articles continue to sharpen up my conscience.

But since I am an oddball, I hope I shall be forgiven for my conclusions.

I still am naive enough to appreciate the fact that our priests are knocking themselves out to get me (a small part of the Mystical Body) into heaven. I shall never be able to understand until I die how such fine men can be so unselfish as to devote their lives to helping me toward a happy eternity. And it is difficult for me to understand how they can work day after day against my prideful cussedness in spite of the fact that the results of their work in my

behalf must, at times, seem almost useless. It has been my privilege in my 47 years of existence to know hundreds of priests, secular and religious priests. I think they're all wonderful; and if this irritates some of your readers, perhaps I should apologize.

About nuns and Catholic schools! I have known hundreds of nuns, too. Again, their unselfish devotion in schools, hospitals, the missions, and in contemplative orders astonishes me. I have observed the products of Catholic schools, and if the products sometimes do not measure up to the ideal, it is in spite of the nuns, not because of them. There still seems to be a small matter of the effects of original sin as well as a large amount of free will at work in the world.

I will not accept for one minute the thesis of some of your correspondents that Catholic schools are inferior to public schools. But if a Catholic school were inferior to a public school down the street, I can't imagine the good God penalizing a parent or child for attendance at the Catholic school rather than at the

monument of chrome and glass erected in honor of progressive education. I'm afraid that I'm naive enough to believe that God will see to it that the Catholic child who attends the so-called inferior Catholic school will not turn out to be a material and spiritual failure in life.

But even if this strange God Whom some of our Catholic parents have dreamed up for themselves would permit their children to receive less than a perfect education for material success if they were sent to a Catholic school, I still can't imagine Him saying to the parents in effect, "Good for you! You sent your child to a public school because you are interested in his welfare. I bless parents who are interested in their children's welfare. Therefore, although My name cannot practically be mentioned in a public school, I'm still going to shower blessings on you. Your child may some day find himself to be a millionaire, and that is important." This isn't the God I know, Who is speaking. But could it be that the Sisters of the Holy Humility of Mary, who tried to pound some knowledge into me, also were ignorant of the true God?

If I may digress for a moment, let me note that there were many nuns who taught me in the grades whom I couldn't abide. Were they slovenly, revengeful creatures? I'm afraid not. They were scrubbed, shining and possessed of a sense of humor that allowed them to tolerate me. What was their fault? They made me study, and I didn't like that. They caught

me when I was bluffing, and they drilled me like top sergeants. This was distasteful. Of course, along with others from our parochial elementary school, I appreciated their efforts when I went into the public high school, since we had no parochial high school.

The nuns had drilled us so well that we found our high school studies a breeze. It is no exaggeration to say that there were times when a high school teacher would ask our opinion on some rule of grammar, because he wasn't sure. But our Sister Muriel had made us sure, even as we were griping and sniping at her for her discipline. Years later I finally swallowed my pride and wrote her a note of gratitude.

Does THE LIGUORIAN make me angry at times? Certainly! It's that old debbil in me again that resents THE LIGUORIAN's efforts to form in me a right conscience. Life could be so pleasant were it not for the fact that THE LIGUORIAN keeps laying down the law, forcing me to line up, if I want to stay in the state of sanctifying grace and live the kind of life that Christ insisted on.

And when the day comes that I find a firm, size seven halo securely banded above my ears, then, and only then, may you expect a cancellation of my subscription. Meanwhile, since I'm having such a difficult time finding a halo, I'll have to pursue my present course of being a LIGUORIAN oddball.

Niles, Ohio

T. J. M.

THE LIGUORIAN

How can we get more help for better
Christian living from the reception
of frequent Holy Communion?

Two Steps to Better Living

GREGORY LAHAY, C.S.S.R.

A REVOLUTION has hit the Catholic world. A welcome revolution! A revolution whose echoes will go thundering through the valleys of heaven in an eternal reverberation.

Imaginative? Not at all. Quite true!

We believe that every grace well used, every virtue acquired and practiced, every degree of supernatural merit gained will have eternal effects in the form of greater happiness for our souls and in the form of greater glory for God — forever.

And that is what this revolution is meant to achieve. It is carried out not by weapons of death but by wafers of life.

A hundred years ago Catholic people loved and revered the sacrament of Holy Communion, but they received it seldom, because a hun-

dred years ago Pope St. Pius X had not yet risen up to convince them that their reverence for this sacrament was one-sided. It played too strong a light on their unworthiness to receive it. He set out to convince them that their very weakness revealed their need of Holy Communion. It was not meant to be a reward of goodness — what mortal deserves so great a reward? — but a means to acquire goodness.

And a hundred years ago, another saintly Pius had not yet broken down a thousand-year-old barrier of fasting laws in a gesture that would sweep away the last excuse of neglectful human nature.

But now the Catholic world is in the midst of a mighty change. It is an object of wonder to see the enormous rise in the number of Holy

Communion day after day, week after week. A *part* of the dream of St. Pius X is on its way to fulfillment.

A part! There was another part to his dream. The vast increase in Holy Communion should be reflected in an equal increase of holiness. His motto was to restore all things in Christ. And the all-important question is, "How well is that being accomplished in the average Catholic life?"

Many an observing priest looks over his parish and sees at the Communion rail, daily or weekly, a woman who is known as one of the more cantankerous persons on the block. Even the pagans have more kindness than she. There is the man who prides himself on never missing a Holy Name Sunday Communion, with perhaps some other Sundays in between; yet he is known for business deals of more than considerable shadiness. Still another who communicates regularly, is forever peevish, complaining, angry at the many vexations of daily life. There is the whole family whose members would never think of Sunday Mass without Communion; yet their home is perpetually echoing with quarrels and angry remarks.

And so this pastor joins his voice to the growing chorus: "Not merely *more* Communion, but *better* Communion!"

HOLY Communion could do so much for problems of this kind. It was Christ's own answer to the need of souls who are willing, but very, very weak. And what an

answer! He gave us prayer, and made it wonderfully effective. But now He did more. He did not merely tell us to pray more and still more, but He worked one of the greatest miracles of His life to give that which would be more efficacious than any prayer. "The bread that I shall give is My flesh for the life of the world. Take and eat, for this is My body."

So in Holy Communion we have Jesus Christ Himself, whole and entire, body, blood, soul, humanity, divinity. We have the Precious Blood of Christ which was shed for all the sins of the world. A single drop of this Precious Blood meeting the right dispositions would be enough to bring about a complete transformation of soul. In this sacrament we have the Sacred Heart of Christ — that heart which loves us so much, and is so anxious to work wonders of grace. For a few contrite tears He admitted the sinful Magdalene into the participation of His love. For a single word of sincere repentance, He admitted the good thief to paradise. For a good desire He made a holy man out of the publican Zaccheus. In that sacrament we have the Son of God Himself with *all* His infinite power.

And all this comes to each person who receives Holy Communion — the carefree child, the worry-laden adult.

Why then does it not work its wonders?

It has often been said: "One Holy Communion could make a saint." Why doesn't it? The answer can be phrased very simply, and it explains

so many of the mysteries of human conduct and spiritual progress.

We are not well enough disposed.

By this we do not mean the fervor of the moment — a quickening of the spiritual pulse at the moment of receiving. This contributes its important bit. But it is not enough. Unfortunately, it is precisely here that many break down. Perhaps through insufficient familiarity with the requirements of the spiritual life, this is all they try to bring to the reception of this great sacrament. But it is not enough. Not enough, that is, to gather in the truly sanctifying effects of the sacrament. What we need is a condition of soul that is *capable* of receiving grace.

Many have a momentary fervor, but the over-all picture of their soul is one of mediocrity. They are very self-centered, full of faults and smaller sins that they persistently hold on to. Christ cannot become one with the soul of a person who refuses to conform to His holy will, who neglects his important duties, refuses to be humble and charitable to others, and fails, through indifference, to practice the other important virtues. God will never force a soul to be holy against its will. And as long as the soul will not freely and sincerely consent there can be no great transformation.

We might better understand that by visualizing two souls receiving Holy Communion side by side. One is a very holy soul high in the realms of divine love. The other is a very mediocre soul who has never tried

very hard. Now at this moment, both put all the fervor they are capable of into the reception of this sacrament. But what a difference! The holy soul has spent years in heroic effort to destroy his self-love in all its entangling vices. Now he is free to follow every least whisper of grace, wherever it might lead, whatever it might ask for. So when these *tremendous processes of infinite love* of the sacrament begin to operate, his soul leaps and bounds (though he does not *feel* it) to respond to and absorb that grace and sanctifying action. The other soul is able to absorb only a pittance of all that sanctifying action. It is too much filled with self. The divine action is not free to operate. Consequently, *part of the effect* of Holy Communion can operate only in proportion as the soul is gradually purified and filled with virtue, so that means a very gradual, and perhaps, very slow process.

But notice that we said a moment ago, that the effects of the sacrament would be impeded by "faults they persistently hold on to." The faults, the weaknesses of human nature in themselves, should not discourage a soul from seeking a higher holiness of life. The very purpose of Holy Communion is to help us overcome such faults.

But the whole point of the question is, do we *really want* to overcome those faults? Do we try, as far as we are able in a human way, and with a great faith and hope, to look to this wonderful sacrament of Christ's own body and blood to help

us do what we cannot do by ourselves?

EXAMINE AND POINT

THIS brings us to the practical application of what we have said. The two steps which can do so much toward increasing the benefit we receive from our Holy Communion: examine and point!

EXAMINE our soul, our life, to see the faults that are frequently flooding our life, throwing up barriers to grace. With many it will be failures against fraternal charity, which our Lord takes as a personal affront to Himself. *Whatsoever you do to the least of these you do to Me. Judge not and you shall not be judged. With what measure you measure, it shall be measured to you.* This applies not only to the selfish, spiteful actions against our neighbor, but to all the sins against the neighbor in speech and thought as well — criticizing, harshness, rash judging, selfishly seeking the best for one's self. We know we should, and perhaps, would like to turn all these failings into the gentleness, kindness, forgiveness, helpfulness of Christ. And what we say of fraternal charity applies above all to the luckless members of our own family who receive more than their share of our selfish mistreatment.

With some it may be an angry refusal to see and accept the action of God's providence in their lives as He works it out through nature, circumstances, and their fellow men. And since divine providence is act-

ing upon them at all times, anger becomes one of their besetting sins.

With others it will be a slothful refusal to give more than the barest minimum of personal attention to God in the matter of prayer and religious service. They need more generous sacrifice of their feelings and time for God.

Or it could be laziness or neglect of the various duties of one's state of life — neglect of the home, neglect in their job, neglect in the proper care of their children, and in the case of the young, neglect of obedience and respect toward their parents.

With others again, it is a great pride or vanity that undermines the value of their life.

Nor let us forget the person who finds it a continual, and perhaps, discouraging struggle for the preservation of his purity, or the control of his weakness in the matter of excessive drink.

Discovering the faults is an important beginning. But it is *only* the beginning. The next step is really important. Having discovered our weakness we set to work to do something about it. We make our resolutions about it. We try to foresee the future occasions of person, place, and thing, and time in order to be on our guard when the occasion arises. And then we pray for God's help in overcoming the fault.

Then we POINT!

We take the greatest, most powerful spiritual weapon of all, Holy

Communion, and instead of receiving it in just a vague routine sort of way, we point it explicitly at this particular fault. We focus upon that one fault, which we honestly want to overcome, all the limitless treasures of grace Holy Communion brings us. This grace, plus a definite effort on our part, acting together upon that fault we are trying to conquer, cannot help but produce an improvement in our life.

TOO many otherwise good Catholics wander rather aimlessly through their spiritual life. They never come to grips with the important and special problems of their soul. So their spiritual strength is scattered, thinned down, wasted. But this process of examining and pointing can be the answer to their problem. It can provide efficiency, direction, and power. It can mean better Christian living.

TROUBLES OF A SAINT

Among the extant letters of St. Bernard, 12th century doctor of the Church, is one that he wrote to a friend, Arnold of Chartres, apparently after receiving a gift of eatables of some kind:

"I have received your charitable gift in the spirit of charity, if not of pleasure. What room can there be in me for pleasure, when suffering claims me completely for her own? The only sort of pleasure I have is in eating nothing. So that suffering may never be absent from me, even sleep has left me. Weakness of stomach is the whole of my trouble. I take a little liquid food frequently during the day and night, so as to keep up my strength, but I cannot take anything solid. This little I do take causes me great suffering, but I fear that it might be worse if I took nothing at all. If I sometimes take a little more than usual, it is only with the greatest discomfort. My feet and legs are swollen as though I had dropsy. But in the midst of all this, so as to conceal nothing from an anxious friend, according to the inward man (I speak as one without knowledge of such things) I have a ready spirit in a weak body. Pray our Saviour, who wills not the death of the sinner, that he will not put off my timely departure, but that he may watch over me in passing . . ."

Letters of St. Bernard

SURE THING

"I seek your daughter's hand in marriage, sir. I love her devotedly and I would suffer deeply if I caused her a moment's sorrow."

"You're dead right, young fellow. You would suffer. I know that girl."

Irish Digest

When Moses was about to die, he spoke to the assembled tribes of Israel: "The Lord God shall raise up to you a Prophet from among your brethren as He has raised up me; to Him you shall hearken in all things that He shall speak to you."

Christ as Servant and Prophet

JOHN E. DOHERTY, C.S.S.R.

IN his second *Servant of God Song* Isaias projects the luminous picture of our Lord into future centuries from the subtly described background of Moses and the prophets. While Moses was the prophet of Israel, the Saviour, according to Isaias, would bring the words of salvation to all nations.

The Church reads this *Servant of God Song* first of all as a prophecy of Christ, both as Servant of God and Prophet of all mankind. But it also sees it as a prophetic description of the Church itself, which em-

braces all nations and in which its members are mystically identified with Christ.

Listen to me, remote islands;
listen to me, far-away nations.
Before ever I was born, the Lord
sent me His summons,
and He kept me in mind even when
I lay in my mother's womb.

From birth the prophet is called to God's service. Thus Yahweh (the Lord God) said to Jeremias: "I claimed you for My own before ever I fashioned you in your mother's womb; before you were born I set you apart for Myself."

So it was with Moses. At birth his mother placed him in a basket and

set him adrift on the river Nile, trusting him to God's providence. The Israelites were slaves in Egypt and the Pharaoh had ordered all their male infants to be drowned as soon as they were born. Yet it was Pharaoh's own daughter who came to the river to bathe and providentially found the infant Moses. She rescued him, then took him as her own son and nurtured him till he could realize his destiny as the prophet and leader of his people.

Isaias' words are a prophecy dramatically fulfilled in the annunciation of Christ's birth. The angel Gabriel was sent from God to Mary, a virgin, before she had even conceived in her womb. She was to have a Son, the angel said, by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit. When she had conceived and while the Infant still lay in her womb, the angel came to her betrothed and revealed to him that this was the work of the Holy Spirit. Joseph was to take Mary as his wife and her child was to be called Jesus, since He was to be the Saviour of His people.

Jesus revealed to His own disciples that they too had been set apart by His eternal Father. At the Last Supper He prayed for them to His Father and said: "They belong to Thee, but they have become Mine by Thy gift."

My word is His sword, ready and
sharpened under cover of His
hand,
Arrow He has selected carefully,
hidden yet in His quiver.

When it is time for the prophet to speak in God's name his words penetrate hearts and consciences, sharp as a sword and sure of aim as an arrow. God gave His ten commandments to Moses on Mt. Sinai and the prophet wrote them on two tablets of stone. These and the precepts that he wrote in the first books of the Bible were God's will for His chosen people. The Israelites enclosed them in a cedar table called the Ark of the Covenant. They carried them with awe and reverence to the Promised Land and when at last God's temple was built in Jerusalem, they placed the Ark in the holiest part of the temple. Now the law of the Old Testament has yielded to the New Law of Christ, but it still has power to touch the heart and persuade the conscience because it is God's word.

The law of Moses was a type of the Gospel of Christ. In the New Testament God spoke through His Son to His people. Jesus revealed the New Law in a sermon delivered to His followers, also on a mountain top. When He ended the Sermon on the Mount His hearers were amazed and remarked that He spoke, "not like the Scribes and Pharisees but like one who has authority."

Saint Paul describes the word of God in the Old Testament and the New when he writes: "The word of God to us is something alive and full of energy, it can penetrate deeper than any two-edged sword."

You are My servant, He whispers,
You are the Israel I mark as My own.
To me all my labor seemed useless;

my strength expended in vain.
His it is, to judge me;
He, my God, must reward me as
He wills.

Yahweh spoke to His servant Moses as to the twelve tribes whom He claimed as His chosen people. And in future centuries He would continue to speak to them through prophets. In the long journey to the Land of Promise, Moses often grew weary and discouraged because the tribes murmured against him, yearned for the bowls of meat they had left behind them in Egypt, challenged him to prove that God was still with them. But Moses stands for a figure of unfaltering faith and trust in God. He knew that Yahweh would fulfill His promise and vindicate him as the prophet and leader of His people by bringing them at last to the land given of old to their father, Abraham.

As the type of all the prophets, Moses foreshadows Christ. Jesus is the servant Who represents the Israel of the New Testament, before God, His Father. He, too, would have moments of frustration and discouragement. He would weep over Jerusalem because the Jews would not recognize what God had arranged for their peace. Yet His darkest moment would come in the Garden of Olives, the night before His crucifixion. Jesus then prayed that, if it were possible, He might be spared the necessity of drinking the chalice of His sufferings. This was because He saw the futility of His agony for so many souls. Yet He concluded by saying: "Not My will but Thine be done."

He trusted in the will of His eternal Father that His sacrifice would be crowned with victory.

Now a new message He sends me:
I am His servant, appointed ever
since I lay in the womb;
to bring Jacob back to Him.
What if Israel will not answer the
summons?
Still the Lord has marked me for
honor;
Still He, my God, protects me.

Moses had a higher destiny than to bring a reluctant and frequently rebellious people to the land of Chanaan, and he would be honored as a prophet outside of Israel. Indeed all the prophets had a more sublime vocation than they themselves could realize. Sent by God either to warn the people of Israel of impending disaster or to strengthen them in the land of their exile, they were often rebuffed by the tiny nation to whom they were sent. Yet their words and experiences would have great significance later and would win them honor among the other nations of the world who would embrace Christianity.

In this they would typify Christ. A Chanaanite woman one day asked our Lord for a favor for her daughter and He replied: "My errand is only to the lost sheep that are of the house of Israel." Today, however, the name of Jesus is honored among all the nations of the world.

I will employ you, He promises,
nor will I be content with you!

services when you have summoned
the tribe of Jacob and brought
back the poor remnant of Israel.
I have appointed you to be the light
of the Gentiles;
In you I will send My salvation
to the farthest parts of the earth.

The books of the Old Testament written by Moses would bring the light of salvation to the other nations of the world; so likewise would the utterances of the other prophets. Their message was first of all to the tribes of Jacob, but their writings would be scattered among other nations before the coming of Christ. Thus Yahweh would use them as instruments to bring to the nations that revelation given first to the Jews in the Old Testament but completed in the Gospel of Christ.

Jesus also would come first to the Jews. He would build His kingdom on that tiny remnant of His own people who would receive His Gospel and return to the God of their fathers through Him. Once established, the Church, which is a mystical extension of Christ, would reach forth, bringing the Gospel of salvation to the darkest corners of the earth.

A message from the Lord,
Israel's ransom, Israel's Holy
One,
to the despised,
to the nation that is abhorred,
to the slave of tyrants.
Kings when they see this will rise
from their thrones in honor of
the Lord, Who keeps His promises
so faithfully—

The Holy One of Israel, Who still
marks you for His own.

Moses led a people who had been slaves, persecuted by the Egyptian Pharaohs, abhorred and despised by the nations through whose territory they passed. Time would come, nonetheless, when they would have their own land and their own kingdom. When neighboring kings saw the care of Yahweh for His people they sought alliances with the tiny kingdom of Israel. A famous ruler from the South, the Queen of Saba, rose from her throne to journey to Israel in order to bask in the glory of Solomon.

This would foreshadow the rise of Christ and His kingdom from humiliation to glory. Jesus would be despised by His own people, treated as a blasphemer by the high priests. He would be mocked by the Jewish king, Herod, and the Roman ruler, Pilate. The same would be the lot of His followers. "It seems," writes Saint Paul, "as if God had destined us, His apostles, to be in the lowest place of all, like men under sentence of death; such a spectacle do we present to the whole creation, men and angels alike. We are fools for Christ's sake."

Yet the great miracle in the history of the Church has been its conquest of its enemies to the faith of Christ. In the early centuries the barbarian tribes threatened to overrun the Church. But in the end the rulers of these tribes rose from their thrones, bowed their heads to be baptized, and knelt down to adore Christ in the Eucharist.

Here is a time of pardon, says the
Lord,

when your prayer shall be answered;
a day of salvation, when I shall bring
you help.

I have kept you in readiness
to make through you a covenant with
My people.

Yours it is to make a ruined country
live again,
to parcel out the forfeited lands anew.

Moses led the people of Israel at last to the Promised Land. He, himself, was not allowed to enter, yet God took him up on Mount Pisgah from the plains of Moab and showed him the land of Chanaan which was to be divided among the twelve tribes, and the portion that was to go to each. Before dying, Moses reminded the Israelites of the covenant they had made through him that they would always be the faithful people of Yahweh. Then he died, full of thanks that his prayers had been answered.

The Moses of the New Testament Who leads us to the Promised Land is Christ. As our representative, Jesus has made "a new and eternal covenant" for us with His eternal Father. When our Lord gave us the Mass at the Last Supper He said: "This is the new covenant in My blood which is shed for you and for many unto the remission of sins." As God's people we renew this covenant each morning when we offer the Mass.

Jesus prayed for us "not without tears, not without a piercing cry," dying on the cross. This prayer has already been answered. We stand with Him at the edge of the Promised Land. If we follow in the spirit of His teaching we shall enter. "Blessed are the poor in spirit," He promised in His sermon on the mount, "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land."

LIGUORIAN BINDERS

We have had hard-cover binders made to order for holding 12 copies of THE LIGUORIAN in a single volume. Anyone can insert the issues in the binder. Those who preserve their copies of THE LIGUORIAN for reference will find the binders very handy, with the index always at the end of the December issue. Order binders from THE LIGUORIAN, Liguori, Mo., at \$2.50 each.



IF YOU CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS

Please notify us promptly of your change of address, giving both your old and new address. It makes it easy for our office if you cut your stenciled address from the rear cover of one of your issues of THE LIGUORIAN and send it in when asking for a change of address. Notify us by the tenth of the month if your copy for that month has not been delivered.



POINTED PARAGRAPHS

The Good Sport

The ideal fisherman is a gentleman at all times. This was the theme of a recent article in one of the leading sports magazines. The author went on to explain how this gentlemanliness can be seen manifested in a threefold way. The ideal fisherman respects the fish, he respects the fish's habitat, and he respects other fishermen. For the first, he gives the fish a sporting chance in his use of tackle, and if the fish is to be kept, he quickly and efficiently kills it. More often than not, however, he is content to return the fish to its native element. For the second, he is careful not to foul up or make uninhabitable the brook or river or lake in which the fish lives; it is a point of honor with him to leave nature as he found it. For the third, he does not dispute with other fishermen over a choice spot, and is careful not to interfere with another's fishing, and he rejoices honestly in the good luck of other fishermen.

The author of this piece was not, of course, writing from a particularly Christian point of view, but it seems to us nevertheless that without realizing it he was providing a discourse on the ancient virtue of charity. Charity enters into fishing as well as any other department of life, and the

three points mentioned above all would flow from a genuine understanding and practice of this fundamental virtue. Let us analyze them and see how this is true.

To "respect the fish" means surely to avoid needless cruelty to the creature. Man has been made lord of creation by God, and it is his privilege to make use of animals and fish according to his need for nourishment or reasonable recreation. But man demeans himself by being needlessly cruel to these creatures; he shows a deficiency in that kindness and largeness of spirit which should be his as God's appointed guardian of the world.

To "respect the fish's habitat" illustrates the same largeness of spirit, together with a love of the native beauty God placed in the world, and consequently of God Himself as its Creator. There is something degrading in the conduct of some who heedlessly and needlessly destroy or deface the corner of wild and beautiful nature which they happen to use.

To "respect other fishermen" most clearly demonstrates the virtue, since it surely means manifesting courtesy and consideration for others at all times, and these are daughter virtues of charity, showing her same gentle

features and exercising the same charm.

May the tribe of true fishermen in this sense continue to grow!

Twelve Million Lepers

A recent release from the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in New York points up the little known fact that, according to the estimate of experts, there are between 12 and 16 million victims of Hansen's disease, or leprosy, in the world.

From the beginning this dread disease caused a particular kind of horror which gave rise to much cruelty. In the Old Testament one reads that lepers were ordered to warn others of their presence by crying out: "Unclean, unclean!" Our Lord touched and healed many of them, and His tenderness surprised the people with whom He lived and among whom He worked. Compassion for lepers was a thing unknown.

All the way even to modern times, Oliver Barres writes: "Humanity, or rather inhumanity, drove the nails of social stigma into the leper's hands and feet, avoided him with disgust, and killed him with contempt . . . the wail of the leper's despairing cries and the tinkle of his warning bell went echoing down the centuries."

In the nineteen forties the discovery of the sulfone drugs dramatically and unexpectedly brought new hope for the cure or at least the alleviation of the disease. Word of this has reached the back areas of Asia and Africa, and lepers by the tens of thousands have come out of hiding

and appeared at missionary hospitals and dispensaries seeking help. Many of them are women and children, for these account for half the total number of sufferers.

The missionaries do all they can, and their 300 leprosariums under Catholic auspices are filled to overflowing. Sometimes even very sick lepers must be turned away, perhaps to die of slow starvation at the outskirts of villages they dare not enter. Without more beds, hospitals, medicines and missionaries, there is no way to take care of them all.

How is Catholic help being channelled to the lepers in Asia and Africa and other parts of the world? Through the religious orders and congregations which send missionaries to these areas. Through the Catholic Medical Mission Board and Near East Missions. Through the Holy Father, Pope John XXIII and his Worldmission Aid Society for the Propagation of the Faith. Surely all who help in any way in this great charity merit a special blessing from Christ Who commissioned His followers: "Cleanse the lepers . . . Freely you have received, freely give." (Matthew 10:8-9)

Scattering the Seed

Those individuals and groups are to be encouraged, certainly, who do what they can to spread Catholic literature in places where the public can have access to it. Prudence, of course, is needed, and respect for the feelings of professional men who have strong contrary ideas about having such literature in their waiting

rooms. But total inaction also is wrong; there is in fact a duty to use with charity all available means of spreading the truth.

The Catholic Literature Distribution Guild of Monterey, California has worked out a very practical and prudent plan which others might find worthy of imitation. A committee in a given parish is set up by asking for volunteers at a meeting of the Catholic Daughters, Mothers Club, Altar Society, or some other parish society. They are told they will be asked for no dues, but only an hour of their time each month. An announcement in the parish bulletin or from the pulpit is requested to the effect that the committee would appreciate all used copies of selected periodicals, to be brought to the church vestibule or some other arranged point.

It is important that the list of periodicals be highly selective and free from open appeals for financial support for some worthy cause. Such magazines have their place, but not in this program, which seeks to set in motion a flicker of interest in the non-Catholic mind.

At a special meeting, members of the Committee draw up a list of professional men and beauty parlor operators in the immediate area, and each member is asked to interview one or the other known to them as to their willingness to receive, free of charge, a copy or two of the literature, which will be replaced each month so that no old copies will pile up and get in the way. The literature is prepared by cutting off the names

of the subscribers, and erasing any soiled spots or markings, and it is stamped with the legend: Free Catholic Literature.

Groups engaged in this work are asked to contact Mrs. Norman Smith, Diocesan Director, Catholic Literature Distribution Center, 550 Church St., Monterey, California, in the interests of coordinating the national effort. Others who are interested in starting such a committee may write to the same address for further information.

* * *

Guest Quote: The Problem of Leisure

A central problem touching upon individual family life is the so-called "problem of leisure." The shortened working day and the abbreviated working week have given all of us many hours which were formerly occupied with labor and which are now at our own disposal. Unhappily there is ample evidence about us to suggest that we have many times been freed from the slavery of labor only to be caught up in the equally numbing slavery of indolence. Too often those hours which are given us as our own do not serve us well in any sense. I know of no phrase in common use more terrifying in its implications than the one that suggests that we "kill time." We must remember that each hour that passes is reckoned, and only a short time is given us to prepare for eternity.

Certainly our leisure must be used in some measure for recreation and relaxation; the human personality requires some lighter moments when

the pressure of life is less strenuous and the happy company of friends dispels our cares. What we are experiencing is something quite different and something immensely dangerous for our own personal development. The inferior quality of so much that passes as literature, the mediocrity of mass entertainment, the frivolous nature of so much socializing, the excessive seeking after excitement — all of these, and so many other factors as well, dull the truly

creative powers of man, break down the disciplines of virtue, and give an example to the young that puts all spiritual values in jeopardy. I cannot warn too strongly against the unhealthy climate of a society where those hours which are given to man as his own are thrown away in a dissipation of mind and body that cannot fail to lead to debility and degeneration.

*Cardinal Cushing,
Lenten Pastoral, 1960*

GET IT STRAIGHT

One of the many wrong ideas people have about marriage today is that married life is simply a more convenient and pleasurable way of living than living alone. That idea, too, is one of the many reasons why young people often marry hastily, with less planned preparation than they would employ before going on an all-day picnic. As in the case of the picnic, their one purpose is pleasure. To put it another way, all straight, sensible thinking is drowned by the flood of what they think is love, but many times is simply the sacred and wonderful gift of sex-attraction which God gave them to use as the foundation on which to build the lasting friendship which is called love.

People who begin married life with this sleepy, one-eyed glance at marriage will not admit it, but all their reasons for getting married are curdled by selfishness, a desire for happiness for themselves.

THIS ALONE IS IMPORTANT

In all the plans and hopes, in all the events and actions, in all the problems and difficulties, in all the succession of days and weeks and months and years that make up life, there are many things which please and many things which trouble us. But all that which pleases and all that which troubles us lasts only for a moment. There is only one thing in the life of any man which is eternal, and therefore it is the only thing which is important — the saving of his soul. There is only one important question a man must answer: "What am I going to do with my soul?" There is only one important decision a man must make: "What am I going to do with my life in order to meet death successfully?" This alone is important because it is eternal.

It's rarely wise to argue with a fool. The bystanders won't be able to tell which is which.

Franciscan Message

LIGUORIANA



The Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ

Chapter VII—Love Is Not Envious (continued)

By *St. Alphonsus Liguori*
Translated by
C. D. McEnniry, C.S.S.R.

WHAT is meant by entering in to the joy of the Lord? It is rejoicing in God's own joy. "Well done, thou good and faithful servant! Because thou hast been faithful over a few things . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." (Matt. 25:23)

But, as St. John Chrysostom says, if we have the happy lot to be found worthy to do something that gives pleasure to God, what greater reward could we desire? This is the greatest reward, the greatest good fortune to which a creature could aspire, to be able to give pleasure to its Creator.

And this is what Jesus Christ expects of a person who truly loves Him: "Put me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thy arm." (Cant. 8:6) Upon his heart, that he may plan everything for the love of God; upon his arm, that he may do everything to please God; so that God becomes the only object of all his thoughts and of all his actions.

St. Theresa says that whoever wishes to become holy must have no

other object in life than to please God. And her first daughter, the Venerable Beatrice of the Incarnation, used to say that every action done for God, no matter how trivial in itself, is beyond all price. And she is right, for every act performed to please God is an act of love uniting us to God and obtaining for us an eternal reward.

It has been said that the pure intention of acting only for the purpose of pleasing God is the heavenly alchemy that transforms iron into gold; that is, the most trivial actions, such as, eating, working, playing, sleeping, when done for God, are changed into the gold of holy love.

St. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi held for certain that whoever performs *all* his actions for love of God will go directly to heaven without passing through purgatory.

We read in *The Spiritual Treasury* that a certain holy hermit used to raise his eyes to heaven for a moment before every action. When asked the reason, he replied: "I am making sure of my aim." By which he meant that just as the bowman first looks at the target to know how to point the arrow, so he looked at God

before every action to make sure of doing it for His good pleasure.

Those who seek God's will in all they do enjoy the holy liberty of the children of God, which makes them embrace whatever pleases Jesus Christ no matter how repugnant to self-love or to human respect it may be.

The lovers of Jesus Christ acquire a total indifference; the sweet and the bitter is alike to them; they seek nothing for themselves but everything for God. They are equally content in outstanding or insignificant employments, in agreeable or repugnant tasks. If God is pleased, they are happy.

Many, on the contrary, wish to serve God, but only in this particular office, in this particular place, with these particular companions, under these particular circumstances; otherwise they abandon the work entirely or perform it with bad grace. Such persons lack the liberty of the children of God; they are slaves of self-love, and therefore they have little merit even in the good that they do, but live an agitated life, groaning under the sweet yoke of Jesus Christ.

The true lovers of Jesus Christ delight in doing only what pleases Jesus Christ, because it pleases Jesus Christ, when, where and how it pleases Jesus Christ. It matters not to them whether it pleases Jesus Christ that they should lead a life honorable in the eyes of the world or a life hidden and neglected.

This is loving Jesus Christ with pure love. We should constantly strive for this kind of love, bravely resisting self-love with its hankering after occupations that flatter our vanity or cater to our inclinations.

This means that we must be detached even from our prayers when our Lord wants us to be at work.

They tell that one day, when Father Alvarez was overburdened with work, he was eager to rid himself of it all so he could go and pray; for it seemed to him that so much activity prevented him from remaining close to God. It was then the Lord said to him: "Even though I do not keep you here beside Me, be content that I send you out to do My bidding."

This is good advice for those persons who worry because they are sometimes obliged by obedience or charity to omit some of their regular devotions. They can be sure that such worry does not come from God, but from the devil or from their own self-love.

Do what pleases God, then let come what may! That is the motto of the saints.

Affections and Prayers

ETERNAL God, I offer You my whole heart. But what a sorry heart I have to offer! A heart, created indeed to love You, but, far from loving You, so often rebellious toward You! But look, my Jesus! If this poor heart was once rebellious, now it is full of grief and repentance for the displeasure it has given You. Yes, my dear Redeemer, I do repent of having despised You, and I am

firmly resolved to obey You and love You, cost what it may. Draw me to Your love! Do it, I beg You, through the love You bore me while dying on the cross for me.

I love You, my Jesus; I love You with my whole soul. I love You more than myself. You are the one true Lover of my soul, for I find no other who has sacrificed his life for love of me.

I weep at the remembrance of my ingratitude toward You. In the past I was dead in sin; but I hope that You have by Your grace restored me to life. My life will consist in this: to love You always, my highest Good.

Make me love You, O infinite Love, and I ask for nothing more.

O Mary, my Mother, accept me as your servant, and beg Jesus, your Son, to receive me.

CHARITY AMONG FORMER ENEMY NATIONS

A moving sight at the international pilgrimage of ex-servicemen to Lourdes was the kiss of peace exchanged between a crippled German priest and a Frenchman after a procession to the grotto. About 12,000 ex-servicemen from 12 nations, 1,000 Germans among them, shouted "Yes, we promise" to these questions put to them: "Do you promise to forgive all those who were against you in the war? Do you promise to do everything in your power for those still held as war prisoners? Do you promise never again to work for a war the victims of which are women and children?" A French general shook hands with every German and said: "Both my sons died in the war against Germany. That is why I have a special obligation to help Germans."

A NEW DIMENSION

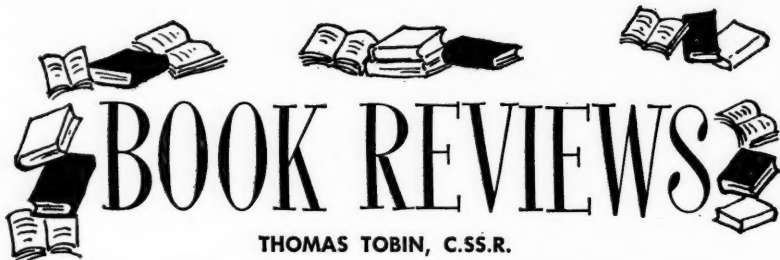
A friend of mine went away for a long summer visit. She kept receiving from her husband and her daughters such bright accounts of their doings that she began to wonder if she were missed at all.

Then a letter from her 10-year-old son removed all doubt. "Dear mom," he wrote, "this is the biggest house I ever saw since you went away."

Precious Blood Messenger

SPEED

Nearly 1,000,000 American men, women and children were injured or killed last year because an automobile driver exceeded the speed limit.



BOOK REVIEWS

THOMAS TOBIN, C.S.S.R.

We recommend that books listed or reviewed in THE LIGUORIAN be purchased at your local bookstore. If you cannot obtain the book in that way, you may write to THE LIGUORIAN for further information.

Reading the Word of God Lawrence Dannemiller, S.S.

This is an unusual book about the Bible. It is a practical guide to topical reading of the Word of God. After a brief summary of the story of the Bible and the role played by each book in the "Salvation Story" narrated in the Bible, the author furnishes selected texts on the principal topics treated in the Bible. Each selection consists of references for three readings together with some portion of the psalms to be recited after each reading. In this manner references from different books are drawn together and the recitation of the psalms adds the necessary element of prayer. The author chooses the essential truths and moral laws of Christianity as the topics for consideration. An excellent aid to help the reader derive more profit from the inspired Word of God.

(Helicon Press, \$4.50)

Recent Apparitions of Our Lady Edward Connor

Many of the recent books on the modern appearances of our Lady emphasize the negative aspects of her message and neglect to place in perspective the positive words of hope and assurance. Mr. Edward Connor, a lay apostle, has brought into focus the more positive pronouncements of our Lady on the eight approved apparitions since 1830. There is also a good examination of the 1960 Fatima secret that will help to dispel much false information and irrational fear. An interesting and informative work.

(Academy Library Guild, \$2.95)

Christian Family Finance

William J. Whalen

The Cana Conference and the Christian Family Movement have focused attention on all aspects of family life today. William J. Whalen, a university professor and father of five children, offers practical suggestions about **Christian Family Finance**. An introductory chapter outlines the financial goals of the Christian family and the following chapters examine the various areas of family life from a financial viewpoint. This is an excellent book that combines general principles with definite applications. All those interested in the various family movements as well as all married couples will find valuable tips in this practical book.

(Bruce Publishing Company, \$2.95)

They Cry for Mercy

Gene Janas

A very amateurish piece of writing about a newspaper man who tries to help the people in a mental hospital with very obvious names for the "good guy," Jim Healer and the "bad guy," Dr. Scurry. A good purpose very poorly executed.

(Vantage Press, \$3.75)

Through Dooms of Love

Karl Stern

Usually it is the modern novelist who invades the territory of the psychiatrist for his material. But Karl Stern, a practicing psychiatrist, has turned novelist. His story revolves around two European emigres, father and daughter, and the love that united them. This reviewer found the book too involved in psychiatric detail without a complete characterization of the two principal figures. Also the end comes much too quickly without sufficient preparation. Dr. Stern has established himself as a first-rate psychiatrist; he has not yet reached a first-class rating as a novelist. But he has the psychological insight as well as the facility of expression that are necessary equipment for the novelist.

(Farrar, Straus, Cudahy, \$4.95)

Bold Encounter

Father Peter-Thomas Rohrbach, O.C.D.

One of the fascinating periods in Church history was sixteenth century Spain and the reform of the Carmelite Order by St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross. The principal facts of the life of St. John are cast in novel form in **Bold Encounter**. It is an interesting story, told with simple narrative charm. But as in most narrative styles the characters are only two-dimensional.

(Bruce Publishing Co., \$3.75)

The Mass in Meditation

Theodor Schnitzler

Rt. Rev. Msgr. Rudolph Kraus, translator

This is the second volume of the series by the German scholar. The first volume dealt with the Canon; this second volume treats of the other parts of the Mass. The author draws heavily upon the works of Gehr and Jungmann to form a solid historical and doctrinal basis for spiritual reflections on the Mass. Written especially for the religious and priests, this book will also be helpful to those who wish to make the Mass a more integral part of their lives.

(B. Herder, \$4.50)

Facts of the Faith

Msgr. J. D. Conway

Monsignor Conway, the well-known columnist in the Catholic papers and head of the Newman Club at the University of Iowa has published the lectures that he gives to his inquiry class. They are a clear factual presentation of the dogma, morals and practices of the Catholic Church. He does not try to establish elaborate proof for each point as he feels that so often an understanding of the Church is its own best proof. A logical and lucid explanation for the inquirer as well as for the believer.

(Hanover House, \$4.50)

The Benedictine Idea

Hubert Van Zeller

The discerning mind and skilled pen of Dom Hubert have turned to an examination of the monastic community that has formed him. **The Benedictine Idea** is seen in its beginning, its development and its possible future direction. This will be of special interest to Benedictines as well as to all men and women who are concerned about the ideal and the fulfillment of the monastic idea as formulated by the father of the monks of the West.

(Templegate, \$3.95)

Faithful Servant

Blessed Claude LaColombiere, S.J.

This book contains notes made by Blessed Claude during two of his private retreats and a collection of letters written to relatives and friends. The reading of the material shows why God chose him to play such an important role in the spreading of devotion to the Sacred Heart. As is well known, he was the spiritual director of St. Margaret Mary. Good reading on the spiritual life by a master.

(Herder, \$6.50)

The Violent Bear It Away

Flannery O'Connor

The young Catholic writer, Flannery O'Connor, who attracted favorable comment with her collected short stories, **A Good Man Is Hard to Find**, will draw the reactions of critic and reader alike in her novel. Miss O'Connor again uses off-center people as the human material of her work. An old insane granduncle implants in young Francis Tarwater's mind that he is to be called as a prophet with the special mission of baptizing the nephew of the prophet. The struggle develops between the father of the little boy destined to be baptized and Tarwater, as well as within Tarwater himself, who fights against the obsession to be a prophet. This is a gripping, somber tale that shows the emptiness of people who are not mentally sane and spiritually whole. An excellent novel that moves with relentless and humanless pace to its end. Many readers will not like this novel because of the drab material as well as because they will miss the whole point of Flannery O'Connor's writing, a bleak description of unredeemed man.

(Farrar, Strauss and Cudahy, \$3.75)

Family Man

Eugene S. Geissler

One of the best spokesmen for the family is Eugene S. Geissler, the father of twelve children. He writes with spiritual weight and practical experience of modern Catholic family life. The style is that of the informal essay that interests as well as indirectly instructs. **Family Man** is a collection of essays which have previously appeared in **Marriage** and the **Sunday Visitor**. Inspiration will come to the reader from listening to the impressions and reflections of Eugene S. Geissler.

(Fides Publishers, \$3.50)

St. Ignatius of Loyola

Giorgio Papasogli

Paul Garvin, translator

Giorgio Papasogli, an Italian historian and biographer, was chosen to write a new biography for the centennial of St. Ignatius. It was well received and has been translated into 5 languages. St. Ignatius is seen as the intensely active founder of the Society of Jesus as well as the able administrator. The picture is well drawn with great detail from approved sources. Scholarly footnotes which amplify the text are given at the bottom of most pages. A good introduction to the great founder.

(Society of St. Paul, \$4.00)

The Eucharist—Sacrament

Rev. Francis Wengier

This is a companion volume to **The Eucharist—Sacrifice** by Father Francis Wengier. It is a theological book for the serious student and is a modern explanation of de la Taille's theories.

(River Pines Sanitarium, \$5.00)

BEST SELLERS

A Moral Evaluation of Current Books, Published at the University of Scranton, Pa.

MOST POPULAR

(Not necessarily approved. Roman numeral indicates a moral rating according to categories used in general list.)

Hawaii (IIb)—*Michener*
Advise and Consent (IIb)—*Drury*
Ourselves to Know (III)—*O'Hara*
The Lincoln Lords (I)—*Hawley*
Trustee from the Tool Room (IIa)
—*Shute*
Clea (IIb)—*Durrell*
A Distant Trumpet (IIa)—*Horgan*
Mrs. 'Arris Goes to New York (I)
—*Gallico*
Two Weeks in Another Town (III)
—*Shaw*
My Brother Michael (IIb)—*Stewart*
The Devil's Advocate (IIa)—*West*
All the Day Long (IIa)—*Spring*
Kiss, Kiss (IIa)—*Dahl*
The Constant Image (IIb)—
—*Davenport*

My Love Affair With Music—

—*Alexander*

The Rascal and the Pilgrim—

—*Anthony*

My Road to Berlin—*Brandt & Lania*

The Dream Lives Forever—*Burton*

Goddess of the Bullring—*Cintron*

Nancy Astor—*Collis*

The Edge of the Sword—*de Gaulle*

Nixon—*de Toledano*

The Night They Burned the

Mountain—*Dooley*

Fear the Light—*Ferrars*

The Reluctant Surgeon—*Kobler*

Tippy Locklin—*Meagher*

Dead Men Don't Ski—*Moyes*

Versus Inspector Maigret—*Simenon*

Let the Crabgrass Grow—*Smith*

The Ardent Years—*Stevenson*

Three at Wolfe's Door—*Stout*

Hancock, the Superb—*Tucker*

The Big Ward—*van Velde*

The Sea My Hunting Ground—

—*Watkins*

Giotto—*Battisti*

The Yellow Brick Road—*Cadell*

The Irish Story—*Curtayne*

Put It on the Front Page, Please!—

—*Cutler*

Velasquez—*Ferrari*

No Marriage in Heaven—*Fletcher*

That Certain Something—*Francis*

The Annotated Alice—*Gardner*

(ed.)

Crimean Blunder—*Gibbs*

The Lost Treasure of Cocos Island

—*Hancock & Weston*

I. Suitable for general reading:

Beverly Hills is My Beat—*Anderson*

The Passionate Sightseer—*Berenson*

Dempsey, By the Man Himself—

—*Dempsey, Considine & Slocum*

The Haskell Memoirs—*Haskell*

The Unknown Ajax—*Heyer*

The Humbler Creation—*Johnson*

East Wind Rising—*Morin*

A Garden of Cucumbers—*Tyler*

The Land That Isn't There—

—*Wibberley*

A Teacher Speaks—*Marson*
 The Future Is Ours, Comrade—
Novak
 Colonel Elmer Ellsworth—*Randall*
 The Montebank's Tale—*Redgrave*
 In Defense of Ignorance—*Shapiro*
 Peter Claver: Saint of the Slaves—
Valtiefra

II. Suitable only for adults:

A. Because of advanced style and contents:

All the Queen's Men—*Anthony*
 The Leopard—*di Lampedusa*
 Wall of Silence—*Eton & Leasor*
 Jessel, Anyone?—*Jessel*
 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue—
Johnson
 The Natives Are Restless—*Lindsay*
 On a Lonesome Porch—*Pierce*
 The Blood of Gennaro—*Calnan*
 Playrights on Playwriting—*Cole*
 (ed.)
 Jury of One—*Eberhart*
 In the Footsteps of Sherlock Holmes
 —*Harrison*
 The Importance of Understanding—
Lin
 Hail to the Chief—*Reichley*
 The Fantastic Universe Omnibus—
Santesson
 The Planetarium—*Sarraute*
 The Affair—*Snow*
 A Fine and Private Place—*Beagle*
 The New Professors—*Bowen*
 Power and Persuasion—*Carter*
 The Lovely Ambition—*Chase*
 Abraham Flexner: An Autobiog-
 raphy—*Flexner*
 Brittany—*Giot*
 Years in Ambush—*Grenier*
 Mortal Victory—*Hanson*
 The Third Mystic of Avila—*Keyes*
 Here's Hawaii—*Krauss*
 My Three Lives—*Lightwood*
 Inside the Vatican—*Pallenberg*
 The Communist Party of the Soviet
 Union—*Schapiro*

The Science of the Cross—*Stein*
 B. Because of immoral incidents which
 do not, however, invalidate
 the book as a whole:

By the Sea, By the Sea—*Albee*
 The Spearheaders—*Altieri*
 Silver Answer—*Castle*
 The Big Pink Kite—*Davis*
 Through Streets Broad and Narrow
 —*Fielding*
 Next Stop—Paradise—*Hlasko*
 Geisha—*Longstreet*
 The Venus of Konpara—*Masters*
 Doctor in Bolivia—*Mautner*
 With Night We Banish Sorrow—
Roberts
 The Dead Beat—*Bloch*
 The Girl Who Wasn't There—
Dewey
 Tongue of Fire—*Frankel*
 The Kissing Fish—*Lange*
 Venetian Red—*Pasinetti*
 Should the Wind Be Fair—*Roark*
 The Sappbucket Genius—*Sichel*
 The Night They Raided Minsky's—
Barber
 The Stars in Their Course—*Brown*
 My Father, Charlie Chaplin—
Chaplin
 Napoleon in Love—*Delderfield*
 The Fear Makers—*Schilling*
 Weekend in Dinlock—*Sigal*
 Pilgrims in Paradise—*Slaughter*

III. Permissible for the discriminating adult:

Lasso Round the Moon—*Mykle*
 In Search of India—*Smith*
 Always in Season—*Landes*
 Set This House on Fire—*Styron*

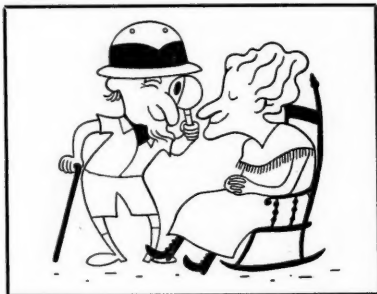
IV. Not recommended to any reader:

Three Circles of Light—*di Donato*
 Fiestas—*Goytisolo*
 The Interns—*Frede*
 The Keener Love—*Thompson*
 The Chapman Report—*Wallace*

LUCID INTERVALLS

"What's the answer to a maiden's prayer?"

"A man's question."



"My dear, whatever made you marry an archaeologist?"

"Very simple planning. The older I get, the more interested he becomes in me."

A little lad from the cabin on the mountain wandered into a tourist camp and watched with much interest, a man making use of a brush and comb, a toothbrush, a nail file and a whisk broom.

"Say, mister," he finally asked, "are you always that much trouble to yourself?"

Checking a no-parking zone, a policeman found a car occupied by two elderly women and asked them sternly:

"Do you ladies want a ticket?"

After a whispered consultation, one answered politely:

"No, thank you, young man. We never win a thing."

An American touring Wales entered a large hotel in one of the Welsh towns. He noticed the words "tam htab" written on the mat.

"Ah," he said, "I suppose that is Welsh for welcome?"

"No sir," replied the doorman, "that's the bath mat, upside down."

"You know, Casey," said the boss, not unkindly, "you're not as big a fool as you used to be."

"Thank you, sir. You think I'm really getting smarter?"

"No, thinner."

Thief: "This is a hold up. Stick up your hands or else!"

Victim: "Or else what?"

Thief: "Don't get me confused. This is my first job."

"I've been seeing spots before my eyes."

"Did you see a doctor?"

"No, just spots."

FILE 13

There are two kinds of leaders—those interested in the flock and those interested in the fleece.

A yawn is an opening made by a bore.

"Well, supposing he has a lot of money? He can't take it with him. Even if he did, it would melt!"

On Sarcasm

The weak point in the character of many people is manifested by their ready and frequent use of sarcasm, either as a last-ditch argument in discussion, or as an excoriating criticism of another's conduct, or sometimes only as an attempt at humor at someone else's expense. Readiness with sarcasm reveals two things: 1) pride, because it looks down upon others as if from a great height, esteeming them unworthy of an honest hearing or equal discussion; 2) unkindness, because the sarcastic tongue is like a lash, which hardly ever uncoils without stinging.

This is not to deny that there is a use of sarcasm that is without either taint mentioned above. In good-humored banter between equals who know and understand one another, sarcasm lends a flavor to repartee; in writing about the general foibles and follies of human nature, sarcasm becomes satire and provides a form of literary enjoyment. But serious or half-serious sarcasm, whether on the part of a superior toward subjects, or subject toward superior, or equal to equal, is almost always a mark of smallness and meanness. Proud, intolerant, inconsiderate people are the small and mean people of the world.

Here are a few questions at random in which you might recognize your own weakness if you are addicted to sarcasm:

1. Do I use sarcasm on those who are subject to me, considering it a means to correct their faults or to make them more co-operative?
2. In an argument do I fall back on a sarcastic remark about my opponent when I am apparently not winning my point?
3. Do I make sarcastic remarks to others who refuse, either deliberately or unconsciously, to take my advice?
4. Do I quickly show displeasure over the conduct of others by sarcasm?
5. Do I sometimes single out individuals for sarcastic comment, which makes people laugh, but makes the one singled out cringe?
6. Do I answer criticism of myself with biting sarcasm?

It is well worthwhile to examine oneself for evidence of this weakness. If unchecked it fosters and increases pride and cruelty, and does lasting hurt to many people.

(This is a chapter from the booklet, *TESTS OF CHARACTER*. A copy of the booklet may be obtained by sending twenty-five cents to *LIGUORIAN PAMPHLETS*, Liguori, Missouri. Write to the same address for a complete list of our pamphlets.)

FOR PARENTS AS TEACHERS

Each September parents who have children in school, even in a Catholic school, should remind themselves of their own primary obligation of instructing their children, especially in matters of religion.

To do this properly, parents must continually grow in their knowledge of religious truth and its application to their daily lives.

The *Liguorian* is a means to such growth. It provides explanations and proofs of Christian truths that parents can easily absorb and then translate into convictions for their children.

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